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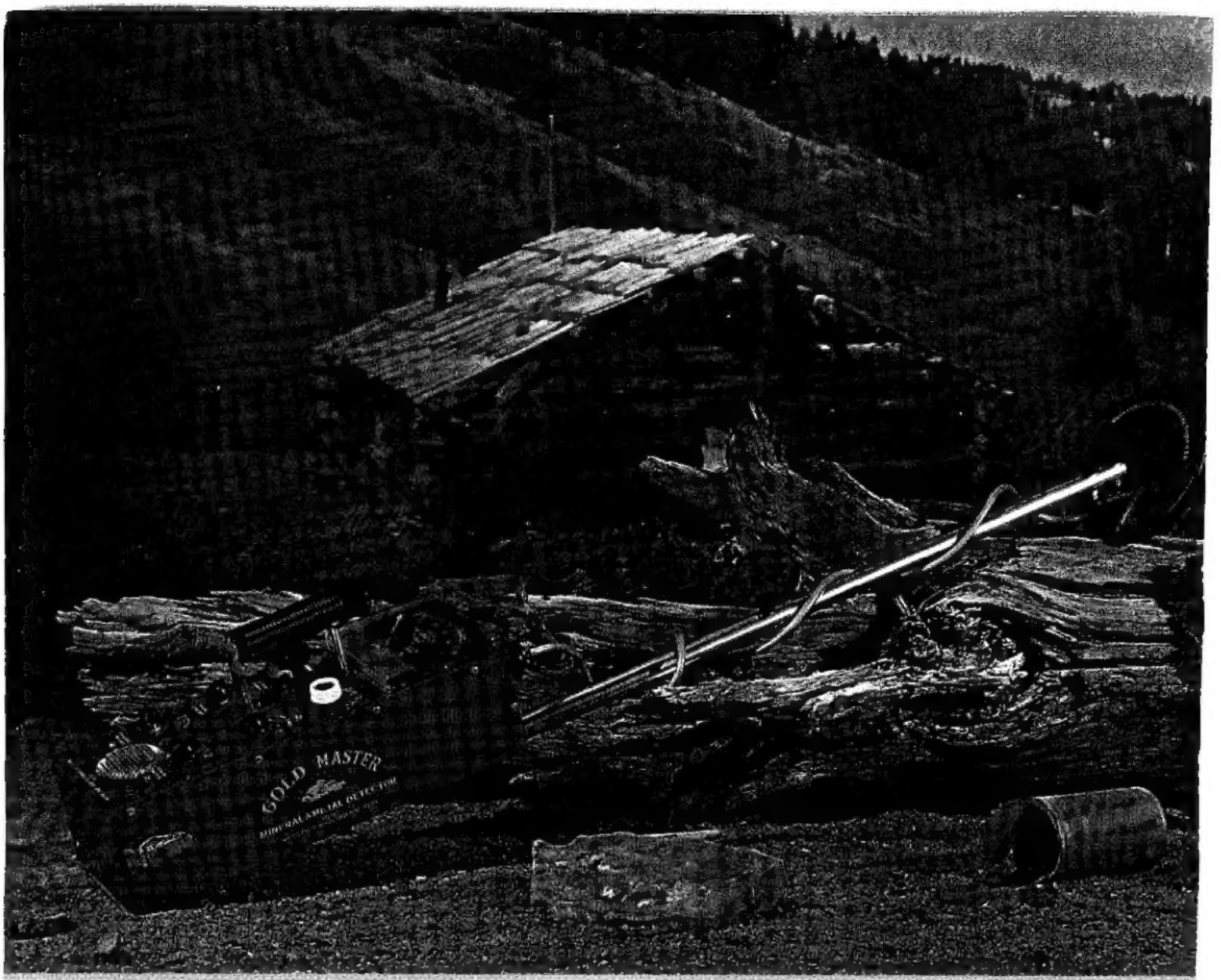

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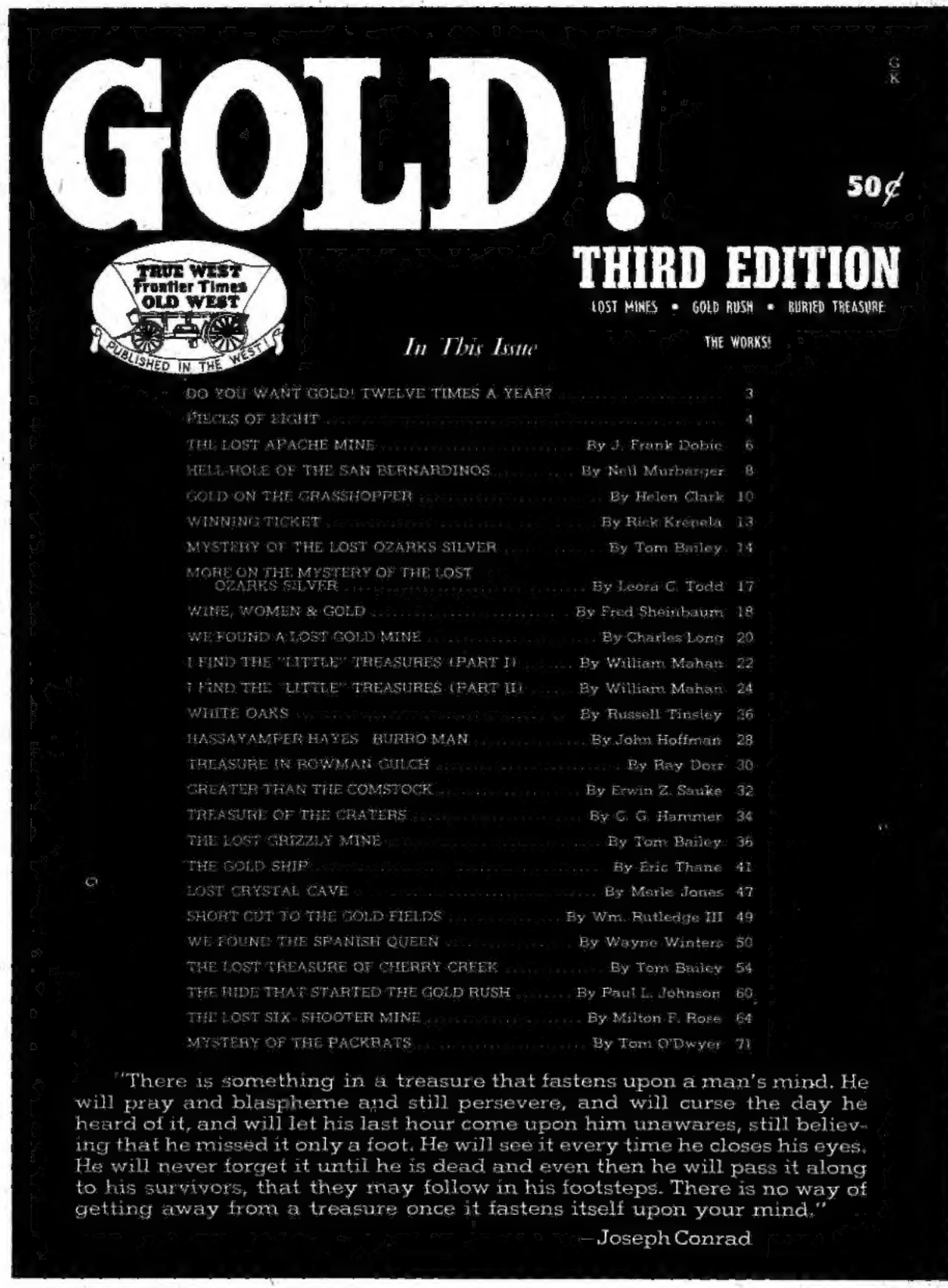
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July-August, 1970
Volume 17, No. 6
Whole No. 100

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"The files of TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES are going to be of great historical value and should be preserved in all the libraries of the country."—Walter Prescott Webb, former President, American Historical Association.

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The Indians Are Coming!

I AM LOOKING at a rough proof of the ad on the opposite page of this issue and the feeling arises: "Hosstail, you've got to run down that gulch even if you don't know where you are going, or face up to those Indians who will be after your scalp if you don't pay off!" Now, I have headed off down many a blind canyon before and never got anywhere in particular so I guess the only thing to do is flat face up.

This is all about a rise in single copy and subscription rates, of course, and the one heartening thing about it is that I believe you'd be surprised if you knew how many readers have written in asking us *why* we haven't gone up in rates since the others have, all the way from a year to two years ago—and even longer by the time we go up which will be our December issue of this year.

In the meantime we are going to be the softies we've always been and allow present rates until then. Actually, looking at it from another angle, maybe we aren't such softies after all since it is more of a mutual proposition. In short, you save by renewing or subscribing before our rates go up to 50¢ an issue, $5.00 for twelve issues, and we will save in that it won't be necessary for us to send you expiration notices even one time. Some of our most loyal subscribers either do not receive, overlook, or plain forget to renew until we send about the third or fourth renewal notice and by that time we would do blamed well to break even on their renewal. This "period of grace" you see, will work for both sides. So, for gosh sakes—TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT.

The way things are going, it is entirely possible that this is the last time in the history of Western Publications that you can renew or subscribe at present rates!

To me, it is a little sad. I am one of these old-fashioned dudes that likes to see things stay sort of as they were in the so-called "good old days." This dadburned change every time you face a new day is frustrating. The old-timers didn't like it—some of them kept their long-handles on the year 'round! I would sort of like to continue doing just what we have in the past, hold prices as they are, make a decent living and have some fun, but that seems impossible these days—even the fun part is a little difficult.

With reference to our trying to hold the price "status quo," about a year ago we got so many *gimme more* "requests" (by that, I mean that so many of our costs went up) that we had to do something, and our cooperative printer showed us where we could trim an eighth of an inch on the margin of each page and save a considerable amount of money. That, in itself, is enough to bug-eye a warthog. We are printing over 900,000 copies of all our magazines now (combined print order) and that eighth of an inch of paper meant more than you could believe! We published the same amount of articles, pictures, pages—everything, just trimmed a little space off the margin. Did anybody notice that? We didn't get a single letter. But that's what enabled us to hold at 35¢.

Now, we can't cut any more margin or anything else but *pages*. Every letter and inquiry we have made indicates strongly that we should leave the number of pages as they are and raise the price a bit. It does ease the reluctance somewhat when you receive letters saying, "After all, most of the others are 64 pages (instead of our 72) and they are charging 50¢."

So give our circulation girls a good workout this summer and maybe we'll all profit. I say "this summer" and that is doubly important since it is the time when we have the least rush in our circulation department and more students want to work! If you were to wait until even September I don't know what would happen since our Christmas gift subscriptions start coming in *that early* and we really have polecat-hell keeping up from then on.

Well, thanks to you people out there who have made our very existence possible. In return, we pledge to continue our very durndest to give you the top *authentic* Western Americana magazines published in the whole cotton-pickin' world! So send 'em in, pull 'em out, buy every issue—and let 'er rip!—Hosstail.

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WE'RE GOING UP . . . WE HAVE TO!

HURRY! SUBSCRIBE OR RENEW AT PRESENT RATES NOW!

Chief Hosstail and his tribal advisors have been pondering for many a moon on how to stretch the wampum. (Those horsemen in the background are creditors!) This drawing of the final parley was sketched just before they ran out of patience and rode up to say "The question isn't HOW, it's NOW!"

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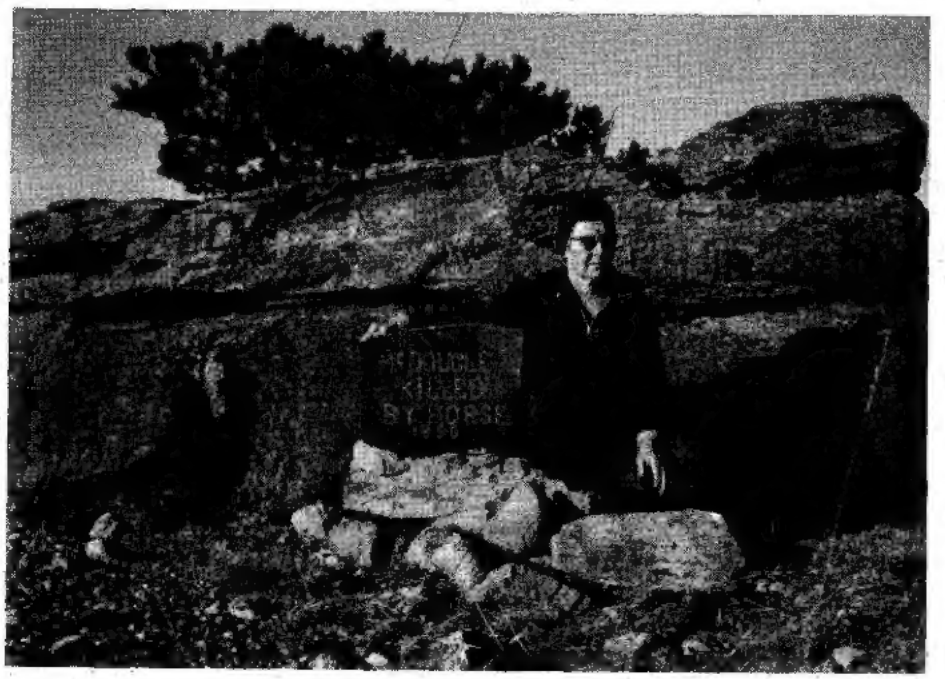
Truly Western



Mrs. Olive Bruner kneels by one of the markers which she and her husband Paul laboriously carved from native stone to mark the graves of persons they felt should be remembered. Below, a closeup of the cemetery marker.

Rebuilding Sheep Creek Cemetery

Ten thousand years before the birth of Christ, it is believed a race of people crossed the Bering Strait, traveled all the way from the Arctic Circle to Central America, and were the first to use the old North Trail. To the Indians, it was known as the old Travois Trail. The Hudson's Bay Company carried furs from Wyoming and Montana north over it to Canada. Old-timers recall when whiskey smugglers and horse thieves went that way as it lay close to the mountains, with plentiful grass and water, and gave them a better chance to evade the law.

Tumbled-down buildings and foundations still mark the way. On Scoffen Creek buildings stand where a Métis family settled after fleeing from the Riel Rebellion in Canada in the early eighties. On Sheep Creek, foundations remain of a little store which once served travelers on the trail. Later on, a family named LaBreche built their ranch there.

For fifty-six years my wife and I have lived near the old North Trail. Some of our friends were pioneers before Montana became a state, and the following is one of the many incidents related to us.

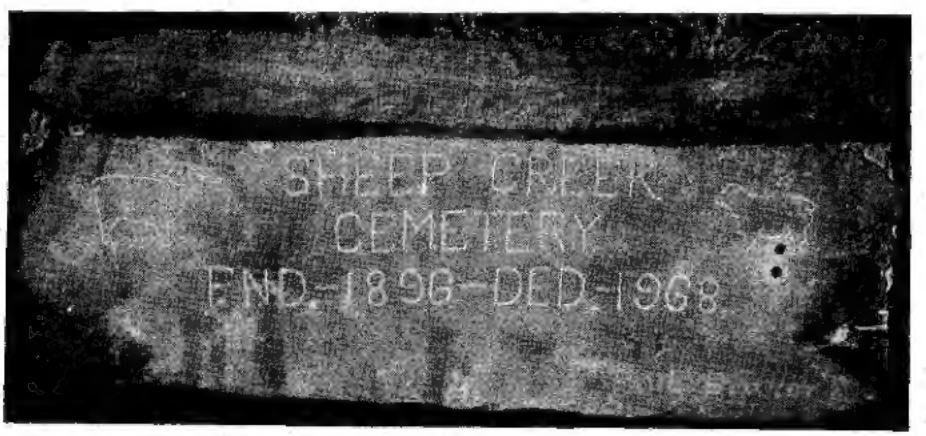
In 1896 a man named McDougle rode into the LaBreche yard, dismounted, caught his foot in the stirrup and was dragged to death. Medor LaBreche ran out and shot the horse. As there was no cemetery near, McDougle was buried on a hill by a big rock. Between 1896 and 1908, five more pioneers were laid to rest there, and for sixty years only little mounds of dirt marked the graves.

Some of these people were relatives of our oldest and dearest friends, so my wife and I decided to rebuild this little cemetery for them. We carved names and dates on native stones for the individual graves. At the head of the cemetery we placed a large stone with the inscription "SHEEP CREEK CEMETERY, FOUNDED 1896 and DEDICATED 1968."

On June 9, 1968 about seventy-five people and the local minister gathered on this little hill and gave their respects to those pioneers. As we stood overlooking Sheep Creek where the old North Trail crosses, with the Rocky Mountains in the background, a wreath was placed on the headstone and we sang "Shall We Gather at the River?" It made a scene we will always remember, and the thanks we received from the old pioneers was something money could never buy.

We have since placed more stones on graves scattered around the prairie. One is for two men who were hanged in 1885 and buried on a lonely hillside. Another is for one of the first white men in this country, who was shot by an Indian in 1883 and buried where he fell.

So, in our work let us say, "What good we can do, let us do it now, for we pass this way but once."—Paul and Olive Bruner, Valier, Montana 59486



Buffalo Wallows

I would like to disagree with some of the statements made in "Adventures of a Buffalo Hunter" in the February 1969 TRUE WEST.

The author said he could hear buffalo "bellowing" once when he was in the vicinity of Adobe Walls. He also stated the "buffalo wallows" were made by the animals pawing and horning the ground.

There are currently hundreds of buffalo in the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge north of Lawton, Oklahoma which I have been close to many times and I have never heard them "bellow." They do make a grunting sound as they graze or walk along in herds—very much like a pig's grunt.

Now a few words about "wallows." A "buffalo wallow" is made by a buffalo "wallowing" as might be suspected. You have seen a horse hunt a dusty spot and start rolling and kicking just after he has had his saddle or harness removed. Well, a buffalo likes to wallow too but probably for a different reason. In winter the buffalo, as do most animals, grow a heavier coat of hair to protect them from the cold, snow and rain. In the spring this old hair turns loose in mat-

(Continued on page 69)

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MERCY EX

By RALPH LEBEC
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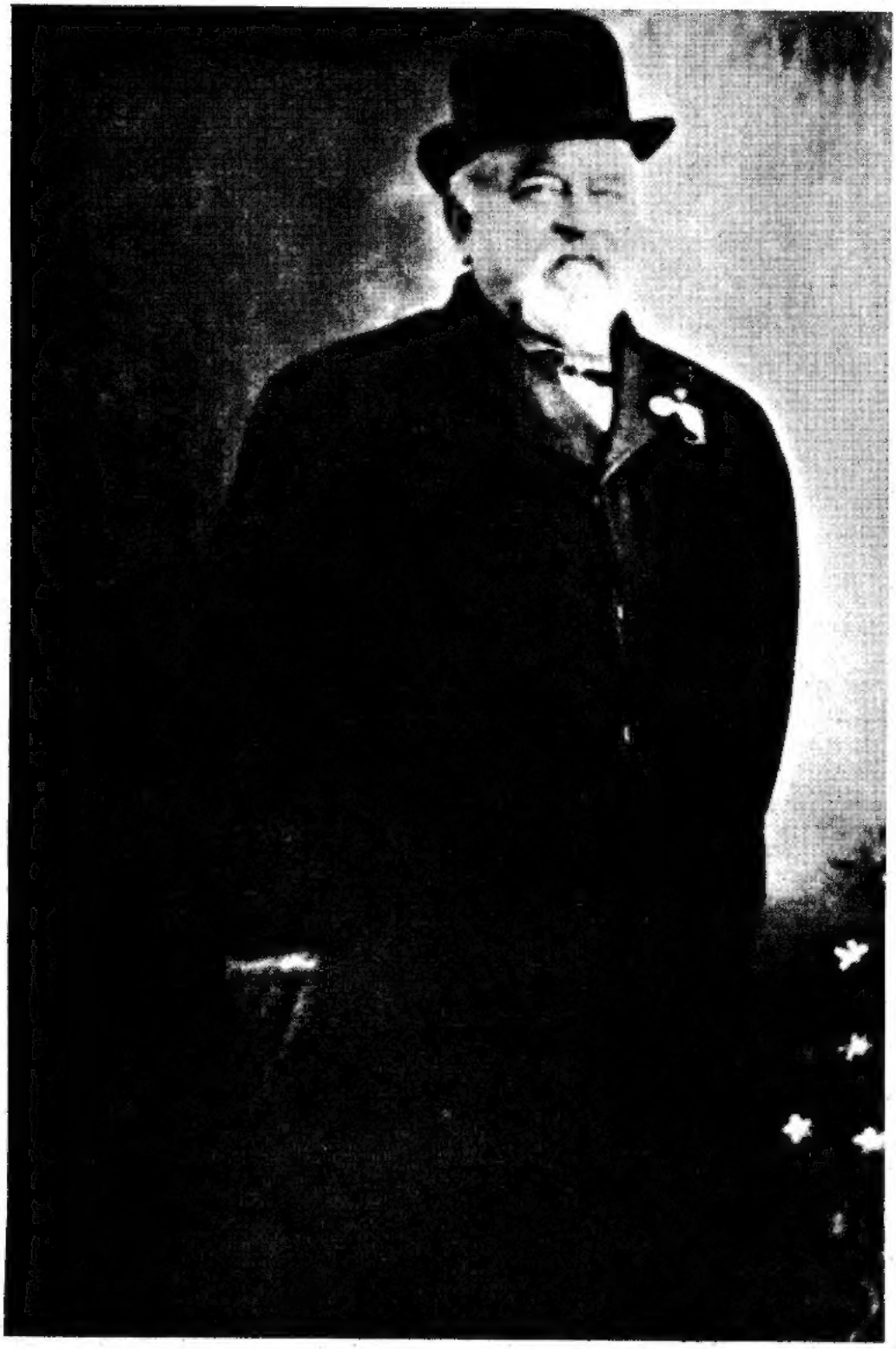

Courtesy Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society

Silas St. John, sole survivor of the brutal incident at Dragoon Springs.

SILAS ST. JOHN was as prepared as he could be against imminent trouble. On the wall within reach and ready for instant action, hung a holstered Colt .44 six-shooter.

It was sometime during the darkest hour—the hour between the stroke of midnight and one a.m.—that Silas was awakened by a resounding commotion. The single room in the crudely built shed shuddered with the clamor of a raging struggle. Sensing that the outbreak which he had so wisely anticipated had burst forth in all its fury, he grasped for the bulging holster, yanked out the pistol and whirled around in the unlit room to pinpoint the source of the explosive disturbance.

As though wielded by a demon, a deadly axe arced murderously out of the darkness. Like a meat cleaver it whacked into St. John's left arm, partially severing it at the elbow. The painful impact rendered him momentarily powerless, and the unlit room added to his grave disadvantage. The six-shooter in his right hand seemed useless. Before he could regain his full senses, another great axe blow bit deeply into the fleshy part of the right thigh. Blind now with pain, Silas St. John, depending on sheer instinct, raised his massive weapon and fired. The bullet went astray, but Silas' show of armed resistance frightened the assailants, and like phantoms of the night they fled through the open door and melted away.

This horrifying happening in the early West was one of violence in its cruelest form. But it also embodied mercy and sacrifice, and a grueling ride to render aid that is unsurpassed in the annals of frontier history. It is the story of two men of steel—two men of different standing in the broad lore of our West, who crossed trails in one of the most brutal incidents in the history of southern Arizona.

THE year was 1858, and the whole nation pulsated with excitement. In a week and a day, on September 16, the first Butterfield Overland Mail Stage, with a whoop and a holler and the crack of a whip, would go lurching over the prairie.

Out West, all along the proposed route from St. Louis, Missouri, to San Fran-

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PRESS TO DRAGOON SPRINGS

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cisco, California, activity mounted. Construction crews labored feverishly to add finishing touches to corrals and stations in preparation for the great day.

Silas St. John was a crew foreman for the newly organized stage outfit. It was St. John's task to erect a string of way stations from the Rio Grande to Tucson. He, like the other bosses along the line, was driving his crew to the point of exhaustion.

On September 8, the station at Dragoon Springs was very near completion. Part of St. John's crew had hurriedly packed and moved to the next job on the San Pedro River. St. John, with six men, had remained to finish up before the station keeper arrived.

Dragoon Springs was located at the base of the northern perimeter of the Dragoon Mountains—mountains which later became the stronghold of the warring Apache chief, Cochise. In those days that area was a part of the Territory of New Mexico, and the region was considered one of the most savage in the Southwest.

Along the lengthy stage route of 2,800 miles, the way station at Dragoon Springs was regarded as essential to the road, but on extremely dangerous ground. It was considered very vulnerable, out there in that desolate desert and mountain country. Tucson was an isolated desert community of 300 people—mostly characters of the worst sort. It lay sixty-five miles to the west of Dragoon Springs; the nearest army post, Fort Buchanan, was 115 tortuous miles distant. It was at Dragoon Springs on September 8, 1858, that Silas St. John, with six men of his crew, labored to complete the corral and living quarters of that precariously situated way station.

THE day was Wednesday, and the men scurried about the crudely built structures guided by St. John, who though only twenty-four, knew his way around stage stops. He had been one of the first mail carriers for the old "Jackass Line" which at one time was part of the San Antonio and San Diego mail line under the contract of James Birch. St. John had left the failing Birch outfit to join the John Butterfield organization.

In fact, when he went to work for John Butterfield, the name Silas St. John was synonymous with the first Overland Stage Lines of the Southwest. He had been making continuous runs since '54, when that area had become part of the United States through the Gadsden Purchase. He had acquired an immense popularity, and there was not another man throughout the whole territory who knew more about carting people around in stagecoaches, or what was required in the building of way stations, than Silas.

The six workers who had remained with him that fatal Wednesday afternoon consisted of three Americans and three Mexicans. The Americans were James Hughes, the crew blacksmith; James Laing, a carpenter; and William Cunningham, an assistant cook. The Mexicans were Guadalupe and Pablo Ramirez, two brothers from Sonora; and Boniface Miranda of Chihuahua, all laborers.

The Americans took the feverish pace in stride, but the Mexicans misunderstood the motives for such a killing pace, and as a result a fierce resentment grew as the day wore on. Silas worked the small

crew till the sun disappeared behind the mountains, thus giving the Mexicans' resentment a longer period to fester. By nightfall their anger was out of all proportion and a positive hate had developed toward the four Americans.

St. John's first obligation was to the stage line. He had seen the hostility in the Mexicans, it showed through in their routine actions, but he was not going to allow it to slow him down. Before the day was over he had decided on a course of action. Silas had more than a passing acquaintance with many Mexicans in the territory. He knew that as a whole they were good people, but he was aware that around that part of the country many were renegades. It was the same with Americans.

After the evening meal was stowed away, and the weary crew seemed about ready to retire, with cheerful tact Silas informed the Mexicans that they were to bunk outside. Whether this course of action was right or not is a matter of conjecture, but it is probable, as the records indicate, that the Mexicans grasped the full implication of that order, no matter how tactfully it was given, and that it added to the smoldering resentment they already felt.

Cunningham, Laing, and Hughes were unconcerned until Silas, in following his plan, admitted his uneasiness by advising the three men to bunk in the storage shed for better protection. Laing then questioned the seriousness of the situation. Silas truthfully revealed that he was not sure, but that it was not uncommon for renegade Mexicans to attack and kill Americans for just being Americans.

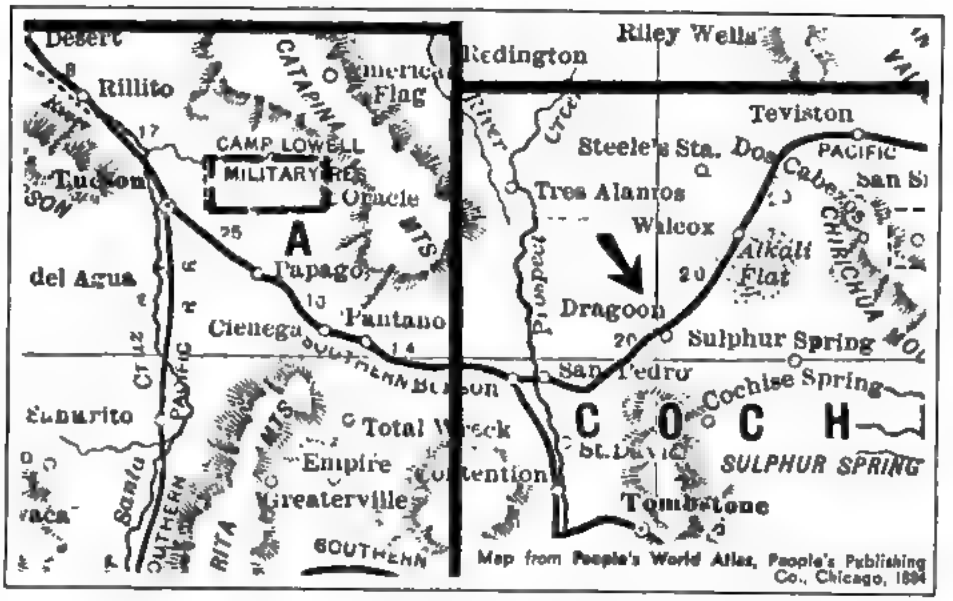
SILAS ordered Hughes to sleep just outside of the storage shed door and to keep a rifle handy. James Laing was to sleep in the center of the room, and Cunningham in the south corner near the stores. St. John's simple strategy was to separate his force, so that if a sneak attack occurred during the night it would reduce the possibility of surprise. For himself he laid out a pallet on the northeast corner, and above him on the wall he hung a holstered Colt .44 Dragoon six-shooter, ready for instant action.

The three men had been cautioned, of course, to sleep with one eye open, but on that tragic night exhaustion was another enemy. Their great fatigue brought about an uncontrollable drowsiness and very shortly after they had stretched out, they were sleeping soundly. Then there was nothing but silence, the silence of a primeval night, the silence of limitless desert—or was it the silence of approaching death? The assumption over the years has been that Pablo Ramirez, alias Chino, was the mastermind of the brutal plot, but it has never been proven.

All three Mexicans arose, according to Silas, a little after midnight. They selected two wicked looking axes and a ponderous sledge hammer. With those three death-dealing instruments, they stealthily embarked on their errand of murder.

James Hughes was their first victim. He was killed outright. The Mexicans disregarded the loaded rifle at his side. They stepped over the mutilated corpse and slowly opened the door. The normal breathing of tired men came from inside. Furtively, the three crossed the threshold into the pitch black room and waited for several minutes till their eyes grew accustomed to the dark. In a short while, shapes began to take form.

James Laing was the Mexican's second victim. With one swing of a heavy axe his head was split nearly in two. Cunningham awoke about this time and they lit into him with great heaves of those massive instruments of death. William Cunningham somehow managed to wrest



A portion of the area covered by the Butterfield Overland Mail route.

The remains of the 45' by 55' corral is all that is left of the way-station at Dragoon Springs.

Courtesy Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society

General B. J. D. Irwin, Post Surgeon at Fort Buchanan, saved St. John's life after a harrowing 115-mile ride.

the sledge hammer out of their grasp, and was desperately fighting for his life when Silas was also awakened.

Silas St. John knew in a flash what was in the wind. He leaped from his pallet and went for his gun. But the intense darkness was a bitter hindrance and he, too, felt the sharp edges of those deadly blades.

After the axe-wielding trio had fled, Silas, with a brutal gash in his right thigh, and one arm dangling at his side, painfully slid back into the crude comfort of the pallet. He lay thus for the rest of the night, agonized but alive, while the moans of his companions filled the room.

MORNING CAME with the sun bursting over the mesquite and cactus-studded desert. The first rays of light pierced the darkness of the storage shed interior, exposing a grisly scene of human suffering.

Silas painfully lifted his head and surveyed the blood-spattered room. "My Lord, what have they done!" was his distressed comment. Miraculously the other two men were still alive. Cunningham on the far side of the room, with head and face battered to an unrecognizable pulp, was beyond hope but still breathing. James Laing, although his forehead lay wide open, was able to speak.

A wagontrain was about due to pass over that savage area, and throughout the course of the first day—in an effort to maintain each other's hopes for help and survival—Laing and St. John talked a great deal. The first day passed, but no wagontrain arrived to offer them aid. That night, William Cunningham died.

Silas was hoping on the second day that some of the crew who had gone on to the San Pedro would return, perhaps curious as to why he and the six had been delayed. But the second day passed without the expected wagontrain's appearance, and no one from his crew came back to check.

Saturday the 11th was the third day, and the dependable sun rose with its usual brilliance. The shed's open doorway captured its radiance. Beams of light casting an oblong pattern on the floor, cut a wide swath across James Laing's prostrate form. Its warmth gave hope, but the third day passed like the first and the second, with still no help.

On the fourth day, both men began to despair, and Laing's senses slipped by degrees. He began to ask for water, which caused St. John great distress. As one man who investigated the brutal results of that fatal night put it: "His frenzied craving for water to quench his burning thirst was of the most heart-rending character." Silas, with joints grown stiff, and weak from loss of blood, could do nothing but listen. Laing's pitiful cries wrung his heart. Too, on the fourth day, the flies were becoming intolerable, and buzzards hovered about Hughes' body. It was only the feeble sign of life in the shed which kept them outside, and the arrival of night which forced their retreat.

On the fifth day, Laing went into a trance. St. John now knew no wagontrain was coming—it was all a figment of wishful imagination. The fifth day went by and he ceased even to care.

ON THE SIXTH day, Tuesday the 14th, James Laing suffered his last. He died in the early morning. Silas St. John was now completely alone. Unaware of Laing's death, he lay there on the dirty floor silently awaiting his own.

Thus St. John was found. As fate would have it, soon after Laing drew his last breath an unscheduled stage arrived from Tucson. It was on its way to a rendezvous on the Rio Grande. The passengers on that stage were appalled at what they discovered at Dragoon Springs.

One, a Mr. Archibald, correspondent for the Memphis *Avalanche*, reported later: "We found him alone in a rude hovel in the wilderness, without food or water, unable to move; his wounds undressed, stiffened, and full of loathsome maggots; his companions had died one by one a horrible death, and lastly, to add

to the horrors of his suffering, the hungry wolves and ravens came and banqueted upon the putrefying corpse of one of his dead companions which lay but a few feet from his desolate bed. The mental and physical suffering which he endured are marvelous to think of. Yet he never complained nor flinched for a moment. Calm and resigned, he bore his torments with the fortitude of a martyr. 'Give James some water,' were the firstwords he uttered when I entered."

The travelers on that unexpected stage were all businessmen from the East, and they knew as much about first aid as a muleskinner about sailing a ship. Mr. Archibald told the driver to high-tail it up the road and to tell everyone he met about the serious condition at Dragoon Springs until someone was found who understood doctoring. The driver took hold of the reins and with a "hurrah," and a vigorous crack of the whip, the coach went lurching up the road toward the east. With its departure, news of the tragedy began to spread.

The horrified businessmen continued their journey east with the coachman, but the correspondent remained behind with Silas. There was not much that Mr. Archibald could do, but Silas was extremely grateful to have him there. It had to be but a short time before help would come. In the meantime, water was made available and the two men contented themselves with just waiting.

In mid-afternoon, the lead wagon of the long awaited train came to a halt in front of the storage shed door. Colonel Leach, Major Hutton, and other veterans of Indian wars hurriedly sprang to the ground. The newspaperman, with great relief, went out to greet them.

Colonel Leach said they had spoken with the stage driver back up the road, and would do all they could for St. John. Some of the men, upon seeing Hughes, formed a burial detail without delay. Those men who volunteered for that detail had seen numerous Indian engagements, but the grim task proved both distasteful and repellent to them all. Major Hutton knew a bit about field medicine, so he bent to the equally grim task of cleaning and dressing Silas' festered wounds.

The colonel, after a quick examination of the havoc turned to Major Hutton, and asked, "Well, how does it appear, Major?"

"Extremely bad, Colonel, extremely bad," the major answered. "What this man needs is a qualified surgeon."

The two military men knew that the only such person in those parts was stationed at Fort Buchanan, and the fort was 115 miles distant.

THE COLONEL rushed out of the room issuing orders to get that surgeon to Dragoon Springs. Under his resolute direction every man went into action. They unloaded one of the wagons and stripped it of everything loose. Then they reloaded it with several large stones to keep it from bouncing off the road.

A knot of men were shuffling around the selected vehicle, slamming grease into the wheel hubs and checking the axles for strength and durability.

"She's ready to rip, Colonel!" one shouted.

Leach examined the readied wagon with a critical eye. "I think it will make it," he said with an air of satisfaction. "Here now," he continued, "two of you men get up on the seat."

Two of the blue-clad men nimbly climbed up on the highboard, and with one grabbing the leather reins they braced themselves for some mighty fast traveling.

"You know your orders," the colonel

About 50 feet north of the corral are several stony mounds, grim markers of violent death.

Courtesy Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society

The Tucson stage depot (date of photo unknown). As crew foreman for the newly organized Butterfield Overland Mail line, St. John was given the task of erecting the string of way-stations from the Rio Grande to Tucson.

repeated. "Ride to Fort Buchanan and bring Doctor Irwin back with you. Change horses along the way as often as you can, and good luck to the both of you."

The confident trooper holding the reins brought them down hard on the horses' rumps. They responded by breaking into a full gallop. The wagon started with a tremendous jerk. The great freight wagon went racing west and, with it, as with the east-bound stage, went the gruesome news.

Silas, meanwhile, with his terrible wounds cleaned and dressed, and some food in his stomach, was resting easier. By early evening, the pair of dust-covered troopers arrived at the San Pedro Station. They went bursting into the construction camp in what appeared to be an empty freight wagon, but when they divulged what they knew of the tragedy, absolute bedlam ensued.

Everybody wanted to hang everybody else. The four victims of the savagery at Dragoon Springs had some good friends among those construction men. Someone suggested forming a posse and going after the killers. Many of them wanted to lynch every Mexican in the camp. Luckily there were a few less emotional men in the crew, and a semblance of order was quickly restored.

When things had calmed down, the anxious troopers told of their need for fresh horses. As fast as a team from Butterfield stock could be harnessed, the crew had them on their way again.

That night the stars and a partial moon afforded enough light to keep a good pace, and by mid-morning of the next day the two army men were in Tucson. The people there reacted in a similar manner to the crowd at the San Pedro River. To most of them, Silas was like kin.

A vast majority of the populace were themselves Mexicans, and Silas had been a regular visitor in many of their homes. The decent and hard-working Mexicans were shocked by what their depraved countrymen had done.

TUCSON, because of the natural desert barriers, was quite isolated, and as a result was a natural haven for wanted men, many of whom were fugitives from the hangman's noose. But even they, the lawless element, were unable to stomach an act of such viciousness.

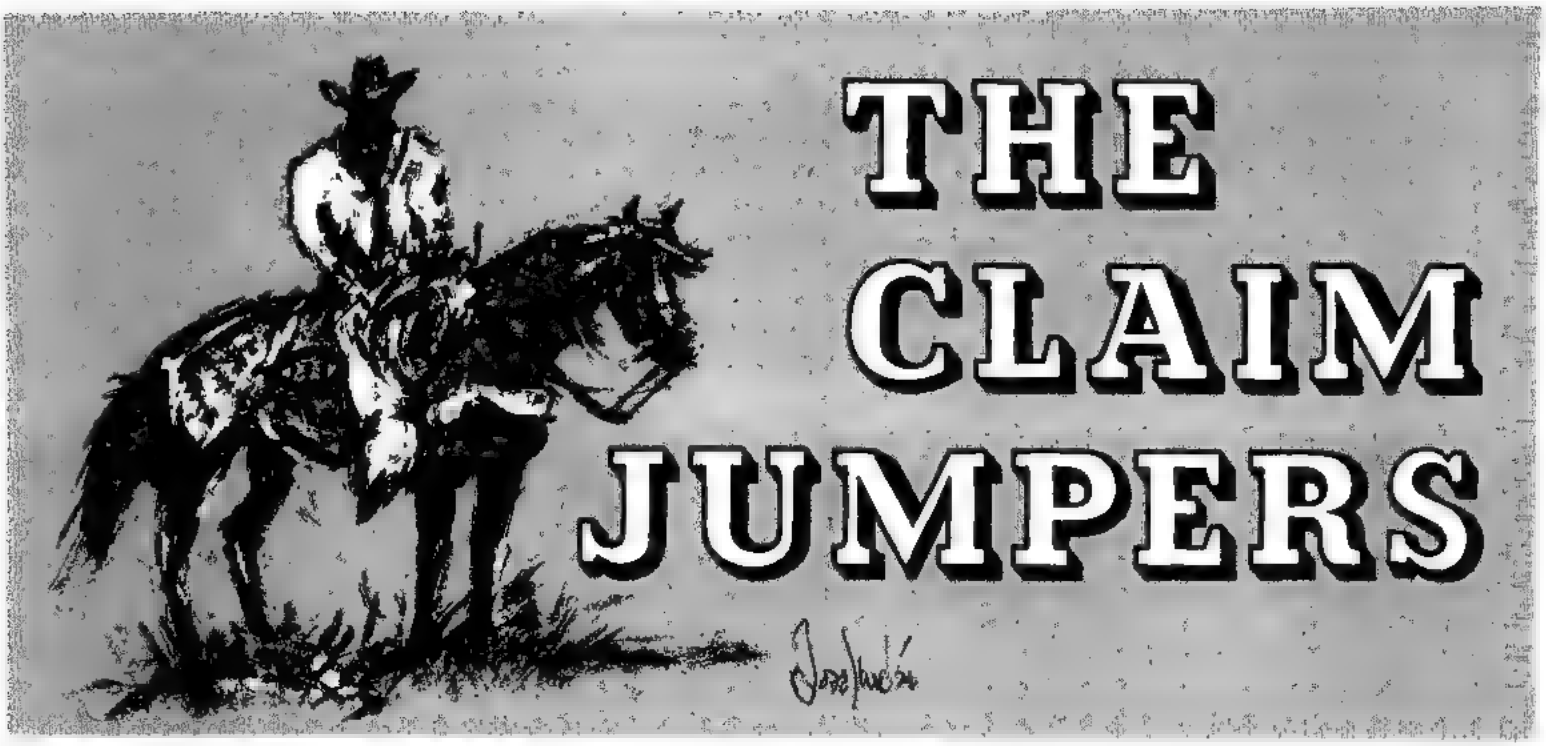
The whole population rose to the occasion. Speed for the news bearers was recognized as most essential at the moment. When the two soldiers resumed their errand of mercy, their team was made up of some of the very best horseflesh in town. Running south, the old road built by the Spanish was still in excellent condition. In the late afternoon, by going via Tubac, the men reached their destination—Fort Buchanan.

Doctor Irwin was notified immediately, then the two exhausted troopers found a bed and lay down for a well earned rest.

Dr. Bernard John Dowling Irwin was a tall red-headed giant from County Roscommon, Ireland. He was considered an excellent man with a scalpel. The doctor had never met Silas St. John, but within minutes after being told of the butchery at Dragoon Springs and with full approval of the post commander, he was digging his spurs into the warm flanks of an army mustang and, escorted by five cavalrymen, was riding over the same dusty route the two exhausted troopers had just traversed. Doctor Irwin was fully aware of the long haul that lay before him but he was an excellent horseman. A deep-orange sun hung low on the horizon and lengthened shadows were turning into solid masses across their blurred path as the six riders started their journey.

It was late afternoon on Wednesday the 15th when the east-bound Butterfield Mail Stage went lurching out of San Francisco on its historic first run to Tipton, Missouri. But the solemn settlers in the Arizona area had forgotten all about the great event. On that day they were listening, rather, for the pounding hoofbeats which would tell them that the noted doctor from Fort Buchanan was that much nearer to Dragoon Springs.

(Continued on page 60)



THE CLAIM JUMPERS

Courtesy ARIZONA HIGHWAYS magazine; May, 1963

By WALT COBURN
Photos Courtesy Author
Illustration by Ross Santee

THE Enlarged Homestead Act of 1909 marked the real beginning of the homesteader invasion in Montana.

During the late 1880s and in the midst of the bloody Indian wars James J. (Jim) Hill had, without the aid of the United States Government laid the railway ties and hand-spiked steel rails across the western prairie lands and mountains, extending his Great Northern Railway from Bismarck, North Dakota, across Montana Territory. From old Fort Union to Glasgow and Havre, that strip of prairie land was called "The Highline" and the various cowtowns of Havre, Glasgow, Malta, Chinook and others prospered as shipping points for beef steers bound for the Union Stockyards in Chicago.

Jim Hill was rightly hailed as a latter-day savior by members of the Montana Stockgrowers Association, composed for the most part of pioneer cattlemen who braved the dangers of Indian warfare and faced untold hardships, and who therefore claimed the vast wilderness as

Malta's first land office in the late 1890s. It was here that Walt filed his homestead claim.

Harry Houston stands in front of his claim shack located southwest of Malta. This is typical of the dwellings put up by bachelors who filed on homesteads.

free range to graze their cattle herds. The big cattle outfits divided the grazing land between the wide Missouri River and the Canadian border by mutual agreement at meetings held by the Montana Stockgrowers Association and the Montana Northern Roundup Association, who fixed the dates regarding the spring calf roundups and the fall beef roundups. And for a number of years the Great Northern Railway prospered by the annual fall cattle shipments.

In addition to seasonal beef shipments east, there were the incoming shipments of boxcar-loads of food, clothing and general merchandise from Chicago, St. Paul and Minneapolis to the merchants of the small cowtowns and cities of Montana and points farther on. And there were the deluxe passenger trains with their superb dining cars and pullman accommodations which became a legend.

Not content with the prosperity and success of the Great Northern Railway and its various branches, Jim Hill, the so-called empire builder, conjured up dreams of settling the vast prairie lands with homesteaders. For a score or more years he had established experimental farms in the Milk River Valley along the Highline, for the most part on irrigated land which produced winter wheat, flax and other grains that invariably won blue ribbons at the county fairs.

THE Enlarged Homestead Act of 1909 was duly passed, doubling the homestead acreage from its original status of 160 acres to 320 acres, and countless circulars and pamphlets were broadcast which read "FREE GOVERNMENT LAND IN MONTANA." On large billboards were depicted farmers plowing up a generous crop of silver dollars. Large banners were tacked to the boxcars and pullman cars of the Great Northern. Immigrant cars waited on sidetracks in Chicago, St. Paul and Minneapolis. Those waiting immigrant trains contained stock cars to hold work teams and farm implements, barbwire and household goods.

Such immigrant trains departed daily, westbound for Montana, filled with men, women and children of all ages who held dreams of a paradise in the free land of opportunity. All of their worldly goods and life savings were at stake. There were not only farmers with calloused hands, but city-raised folks—store clerks, bookkeepers, ministers, schoolteachers, men from all walks of life, a lot of them fresh from foreign countries who had taken out citizenship papers. With few exceptions those men and women and children were destined for the dark clouds of failure, poverty, and broken dreams and hearts in the promised land.

Land locators appeared in every cowtown along the Highline, to locate those unfortunate people on arid, waterless prairie land. In Jim Hill's pamphlets and circulars no mention was made of the long drouth-stricken summers or the bitter cold of the long snowbound winters.

The homesteader invasion of the free range was a death knell to the pioneer cattleman of Montana. Barbwire fences cut off waterholes and creeks; the grass sod was plowed under. The fenced-in homesteads produced a crop of tumbleweeds which blown by a dry wind, piled up against the fences. Deserted tarpaper homesteader shacks became a mute monument of failure, an immense graveyard of shattered hopes, of misery and poverty, the requiem sung in the howl of the north wind of the blizzard after bone-dry summer had dried up the first green shoots of the unharvested crops of winter wheat.

During the summer of 1911 I had passed my twenty-first birthday and was therefore eligible to file on a 320-acre homestead. Charlie Beard, a small rancher in the Little Rockies and Justice of Peace at Zortman, Montana, was also a qualified surveyor and during the past years had surveyed the patented land owned by my father's Circle C outfit. That land included all the small ranches within a radius as far south as the

For confusing eye-witnesses, there's nothing like the judicious use of bandanas!

B. W. Brockway (with feet on desk), land commissioner and notary public, sits comfortably at his desk in the old log land office. George Clanton, stockman, sits center, while Charlie Leep takes it easy in the wicker chair.

Looking east on Front Street in Dodson, 1910. Dr. K. Hamilton had recently added the Dodson Drugstore to the business section. It was in Dodson that the hearing of charges against Walt Coburn and Jake Myers took place.

Missouri River, east to the Larb Hills, north as far as Big Warm Creek, and west to the boundary fence of the Fort Belknap Reservation. Charlie Beard had compiled these parcels of patented land belonging to the Circle C, along with leased school sections, in one large blueprint map about five feet square.

Charlie knew every square mile of that part of Montana, the location of every section corner which was marked by a long steel spike with brass cap showing the United States Government survey dating back to the 1880s when the boundary lines of the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation were established.

WHEN the time came for me to file on my homestead, Charlie Beard showed up at the ranch in his buckboard, with transit, surveyor's chain and blueprint maps. Pencil in hand he pointed out a strip of land located alongside the reservation fence which was government land. "That's where we'll locate your homestead, Walt, before some scissorbill nester beats you to it."

The south boundary of my homestead took in seven acres of fenced-in alfalfa field planted by our outfit, which adjoined the reservation fence, and included within the homestead was a sizeable flowing spring and the established stage road that entered the reservation gate on the Malta-Zortman route. There was no need to fence the land in because the reservation fence established the west boundary and the fenced-in alfalfa field established the south boundary. A plowed furrow following the survey line on the east and north would take the place of a barbwire fence.

I spent the whole day helping survey the 320-acre strip, chaining it off and driving wooden pegs in the ground every 100-chain foot, with a sulky plow following the survey line. In the seven-acre alfalfa field which had just been harvested, leaving only stubble, I pounded the stakes in close to the ground so that the sharp blades of the mowing machine would not hit the pegs when the haying crew cut the alfalfa the following season.

All during the day while I helped with the survey, I was vaguely aware of our every move being watched from inside the reservation fence. First there was only one watcher, a white squawman who had taken up squawman's rights to build his log cabin, barn and corrals on Beaver Creek. A man named Jasper Spurlock. Then his brother-in-law and next-door neighbor, a man named John Wells, joined him.

It was almost sundown when we finished, and just as Charlie Beard was stowing his transit in the buckboard Spurlock and Wells rode up. Spurlock was a six-foot, lean man with graying hair and mustache. He always wore a spotted calfskin vest that no white cowpuncher would be caught dead wearing. He packed a .38 Colt automatic in a shoulder holster beneath his unbuttoned vest, and judging from his high-chinned manner you'd have thought he wore a nickel-plated deputy marshal's star pinned to the vest. John Walsh was a medium-sized man with sandy-reddish hair and a paunch.

"What's going on here?" Spurlock's thin-lipped mouth twisted.

"I've just taken up my homestead rights," I proclaimed with pride. I'd taken a bald-faced kid's dislike to Spurlock the first time I'd ever laid eyes on the squawman a few years before, and I'd never gotten over the distrust I felt for him. I didn't like the way he talked, as if he were the agent at the Fort Belknap Reservation just because he was married to the halfbreed daughter of the sub-agent at Lodge Pole. I'd heard Spurlock patterned his high-handed manner after his father-in-law who was a troublemaker. As for the paunchy, easy-going Wells I figured he was just there to listen and let it go at that.

"Any man," Spurlock said with a smile that left his eyes as cold as last winter's ice, "who files on a homestead claim is supposed to stay on it—plow the land and grow a crop. Bear that in mind, kid." And he reined off and rode back through the reservation gate with Wells following him like a coon dog.

Though Charlie Beard was well acquainted with both squawmen I noticed he didn't speak to either of them, simply ignoring them as he dismantled his tripod and shoved the instrument into a shabby saddle leather case.

"Better keep a weather eye cocked on Spurlock, young feller," Beard advised me as we rode back to the ranch in the buckboard.

The business section in Malta included the Chambers Hardware Store, shown here in 1905. Today, the Chambers Building occupies the same location.

John A. Tressler, the first mayor of Malta, and the first to establish a law office there. He was the attorney who successfully defended Walt and Jake at the hearing in Dodson.

Courtesy Montana Historical Society, Helena

Front Street in Glascow, Montana, date unknown.

SPURLOCK had lost two lawsuits with the Circle C over water rights to Beaver Creek in the Supreme Court at Helena during the years he had taken up his squawman's rights on the reservation, and that evening as we sat together in the office talking, Charlie Beard and Jake Myers, the Circle C ranch foreman, agreed that Spurlock was still licking his wounds, that he was a troublemaker, and was heartily disliked by most of the other squawmen and by the old full-blood Assiniboines and Gros Ventres.

"Tomorrow morning," Jake Myers told me, "you and Charlie better be on the stage for Malta. Charlie will help you file on the right homestead at the land office. With Judge Beard riding herd on you, you'll keep outa trouble in town." Jake grinned when he said it, to take the sting out.

Jake was ribbing me about the time a few months before when me'n a couple of Circle C cowpunchers painted the mining camp cowtown of Zortman red, and Charlie Beard in his official capacity of justice of peace at Zortman had fined me forty dollars for a new roof on the schoolhouse. Judge Beard was a just and honest man who lived up to his sworn oath of office, playing no favorites. If he had had a son who violated the law he'd have meted out the same punishment. I was guilty, and when Judge Beard threw the book at me the morning after my arrest I figured I had it coming. And it never dented our lifelong friendship in any manner. Charlie Beard had known me since I was a yearling and he was a grown man. It was that sort of friendship. I was always welcome at his ranch in the Little Rockies and I'd helped him survey many times when he came to the ranch.

The following morning me'n Charlie Beard took the stage to Malta, and he accompanied me to the log cabin land office. B. W. Brockway was the first U.S. land commissioner, and it was there I filed my homestead claim.

A couple of Métis breeds built my sod-roofed log cabin. A sulky disc plow turned over about twenty-five acres of level land below the spring, and seeded the land in bluejoint and timothy. The one-roomed cabin had a built-in bunk, a sheet-iron camp stove, and an old kitchen table on the hard-packed dirt floor. A lantern, tin dishes, a skillet and Dutch oven were the extent of the meager furnishings. Sometimes I slept there at night, and I made it a point to show up there each day for an hour or so just to fulfill the requirements of a homesteader—but mainly for the benefit of Spurlock and Wells in case they were spying with field glasses.

Thus a year went by, and while I was working as a cowhand for the Circle C outfit I made the token gesture, all that the law required of any homesteader in Montana. Neither Spurlock nor Wells had made a move to contest my claim.

Pete Olson, the hired man at the ranch who tended to milking the cows, was in the habit of grazing his dozen or more range milch cows at my homestead, herding them there each morning, leaving them on good feed and water all day, then gathering them in the evening. The second crop of alfalfa had been cut and

(Continued on page 44)

Chinook, Montana as seen from North Hill. Photo by Chas. E. Morris, date unknown.

Courtesy Montana Historical Society, Helena

I DANCED WITH BELLE STARR

The setting was right for a youthfu dangerous lady, a dangerous country, to last till sunrise

Courtesy Oklahoma Historical Society

The outlaw queen, Belle Starr

During the latter years of the 1920s B. E. "Cyclone" Denton rarely missed a Sunday afternoon visiting me at my home. If I happened to be out with my family for a spin in the country, he would be sitting on the front porch waiting for me. At that time he was in his late seventies and I enjoyed his visits for he was full of stories such as this one.—Ramon F. Adams.

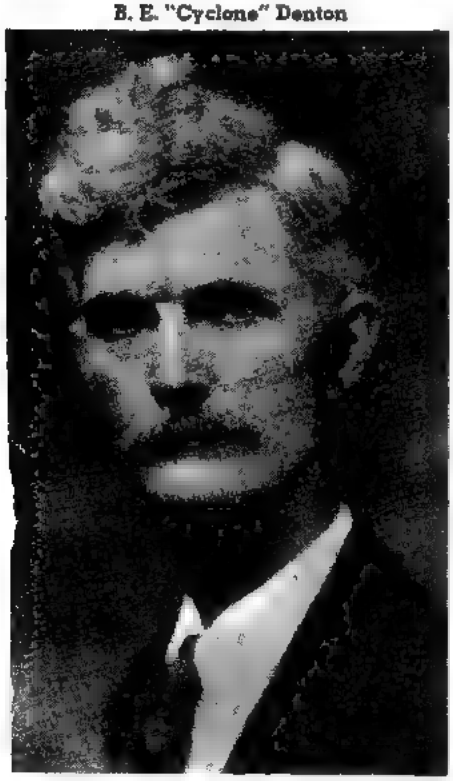
IN the Eighties the yearning to find out what was just beyond the horizon lured me from my Texas ranch home to seek adventure in strange lands. Though I was but seventeen, I was a good rider, a fair shot, felt that I was a full-fledged frontiersman, and craved excitement, that sustenance of foolish youth.

I wandered into Indian Territory which, in those days, was the hotbed of horsethieves and outlaws. But thoroughly familiar with the habits and traits of the horsethief, I didn't have to be told that I was in a section where they flourished. The men I met on the trail were typical of that class, always sizing up my horse before speaking to me, a prominent characteristic. I began

By CYCLONE DENTON
as told to
RAMON F. ADAMS

Photos Courtesy Author

B. E. "Cyclone" Denton



Courtesy Oklahoma Historical Society

The Arkansas River. Cyclone Denton got word that Belle Starr and "friends" hung out a great deal near the Arkansas, Verdigris, and Grand Rivers.

infatuation—a nd enough music

watching them after they had passed to see if they looked back. An honest cowman never looks back after passing. It is bad etiquette and a sign of distrust, but the horsethief will always do so. He may wait a mile but his nature just can't overcome the trait.

One evening many years ago, I was riding over the Arbuckle Mountains in the Choctaw Nation on the old Whisky Trail. Some four or five miles before I got to the pass I began to notice several shacks that I felt sure were shacks of horsethieves. Having been raised in the West and used to horse and cow thieves all my life, knowing their ways of living and habits, I knew by instinct that I was in the neighborhood of that class of people. These shacks always looked like they were thrown together for a short stay. Even the little trails that led up the mountains in different directions from these dens proved that I was in a horsethief country. The shacks were usually located near a thicket or surrounded by one. These thieves were always ready to run or fight, and in case of danger the thickets gave them something to jump into. That evening in passing these shacks I saw one or two little trees where they'd been in the habit of tying their horses. About a mile before the Whisky Trail went up over the mountain, I met what I was sure to be a horsethief. I could tell by the way he glanced at my horse.

WHEN I came to a creek at the foot of the mountain, I found two men and their families. Each had a wagon and a good team. They hailed me and asked if I thought it was a safe place to camp. They looked as though they were afraid of the wild surroundings and asked me what I thought about it. I told them that it was a very likely place for horsethieves. They asked me if I would camp with them. I refused, telling them that I preferred to camp alone in case of trouble. I told them my name and should I return anytime during the night I would call it out.

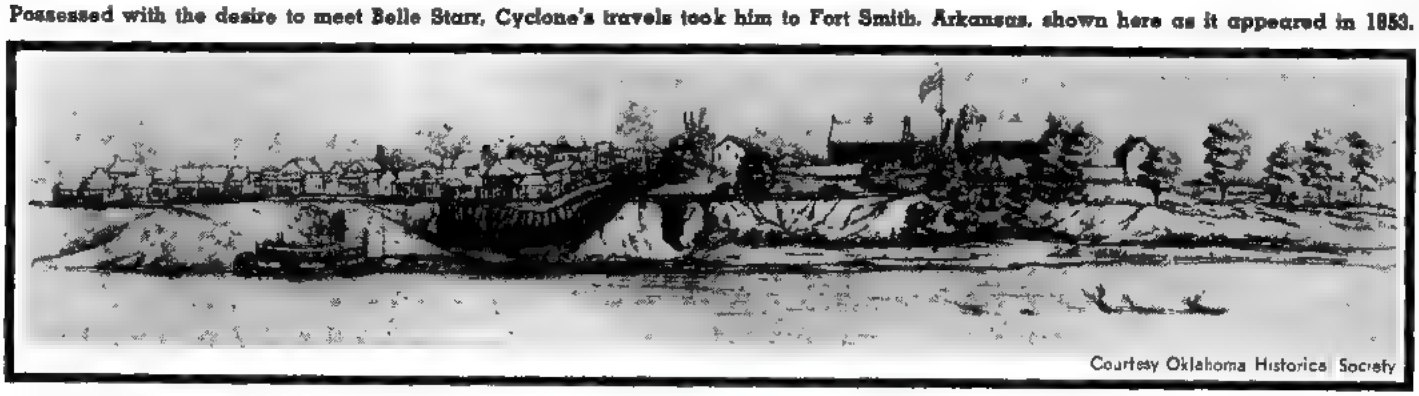
I went about 200 yards around a bend of the mountain to be by myself. After I had supper, a wild looking man with black eyes, well loaded with guns, came riding by and asked me if I was putting up for the night. I told him I was. He was spotting for the horsethieves. After looking my horse, me and my guns over, he slowly rode off.

This sort of made cold shivers run up my back because I realized most certainly I was camping among a gang of thieves. I let my horse Topsy graze for a while, and in place of staying by my campfire, I got my buffalo .50 and lay flat on the ground some thirty or forty yards from Topsy downhill so I could do good skylighting.

After I'd been lying there some three or four hours skylighting old Topsy and his safety, I heard shooting at the upper camp. I went to Topsy where he was prancing with excitement, for he realized his danger and depended on me for his safety. I saddled him and rode back toward the upper camp. When I got there the women were screaming. I yelled my name when I got about fifty yards from their camp so they wouldn't shoot me. I told them I had come to give them any help possible.

They showed me where the horsethieves, one on either side, had dashed by and cut loose their horses. Both they

Possessed with the desire to meet Belle Starr, Cyclone's travels took him to Fort Smith, Arkansas, shown here as it appeared in 1853.



Courtesy Oklahoma Historical Society

Courtesy Oklahoma Historical Society

The main gate at Fort Gibson in its restored condition today. Denton found work breaking horses on a ranch near the fort.

and the horsethieves did some shooting but without effect. I told them that when daylight came we would see what could be done. I was used to that kind of situation and knew how to keep a cool head. When daylight came we saw that they had run the horses due west, the way I had come that evening, keeping to the dim road toward old Fort Sill. They told me they were sure the horses had gone west. I told them that they had surely *started* west, but they wouldn't go far that way. Knowing the horsethief's tricks so well, I took my time and noted closely the way some of the horses' hoofs dragged. Some of those horses picked their feet up quick-like, and some of them made a little scar on the ground two or three inches long in a kind of drag. Hurrying west over the trail for about a mile, I studied the tracks and concluded that I would know them anywhere.

I went back to camp to give them my opinion. My experience with horsethieves is that they will lead you in the opposite direction in which they intend to go. No doubt they went five or six miles west to convince the pursuer of their intention of continuing in that direction, but I was onto their tricks. Leaving camp again, I struck due south for I'd told the campers I believed they would head east to Texarkana, Texas, or Fort Smith, Arkansas, for the market was better at these places.

AFTER I had ridden into the valley some mile and a half south I came upon a trail bearing the same tracks, which I recognized instantly. I then went back to camp and told the people what I had found. Then I returned to the trail where I had last left it and pulled right out after the thieves. I rode very hard all day, hot on their trail in order to convince myself whether they would turn right to Texas or left to Arkansas before night. Late that afternoon I saw they had begun to bend for Texas and I followed the trail that led in that direction. You can't trail at night, but you can follow direction and ride.

Watering and grazing my horse, and eating a bite myself about dusk, I lit out in the direction I was sure they had gone. That night's ride carried me into the foothills of the Kiamichi Mountains. When daylight came I gave my old horse Topsy another grazing spree, then rode a little north of east until I came to the Kiamichi. I didn't find any tracks of horses or men, so I turned back southwest until I got back to my old trail. I rode on about three miles when I found fresh tracks of the men I had been following. Looking my guns over, I charged ahead after them at a faster gait.

After I'd ridden five or six miles I could see the outlaws and horses. I spurred old Topsy, threw him into full speed in order to excite them, and commenced shooting, but I didn't really want to kill because I had so much advantage shooting to their backs and them shooting backwards at me. Snatching my old buffalo .50, I cracked down right close to the lead man. In the meantime they threw several shots back at me, but I could tell by the sing of the bullets nothing was cutting real close. They were such desperate characters they tried hard to run those horses and get away with them. After a three- or four-hundred-yard chase one might knock me off my horse so I cracked down to kill. The second shot, after I got in earnest, I knocked the front man's horse down. The rear man picked him up behind him and left the four horses they had stolen. After they had passed the flats some miles away, I felt safe. With my lariat, I necked the horses and took them back to their owners, still in camp for they couldn't go anywhere without their horses. I got there on the third day after I'd left. My horse was badly done up by the trip, doing without grain.

After two or three day's rest the campers went on down the road to Phoenix, Arizona, and my horse got well rested. They tried every way to persuade me to take pay, but I refused and told them I was only too glad to help them and hoped that if they ever had any more such trouble they would remember the horsethief's tricks.

AFTER this horse run, I dropped over in the edge of Arkansas and visited Fort Smith where more outlaws have been tried than any other town in the United States. The name of Belle Starr was upon every tongue and my youthful curiosity and admiration demanded a sight of her. From Fort Smith I went to

(Continued on page 52)

Belle Starr's hideout home in Younger's Bend, Indian Territory.

Courtesy Oklahoma Historical Society

Tapered flint, a feathered shaft, and a strong arm to send it on its way. That was the

DEATH MESSENGER OF THE INDIANS

By MILLER J. STEWART

Illustrations by Nick Eggenhofer

Illustrations Courtesy Author

From The Westerner's Brand Book, Denver 1954

ARE YOU a collector of arrowheads? Do you like to search old hunting grounds or sites of Indian-soldier engagements to search for them? Have you ever wondered about the role these little triangular pieces of flint or metal played in the hunting of bison, the antelope, and yes, the more dreadful affairs of death and suffering to countless soldiers, civilians and even Indians?

One delightful July day I strolled across the site of the Fetterman Massacre and the toe of my boot picked up a piece of triangular-shaped metal. I reached down, picked it up and held in my hand an old time-worn arrowhead. It must have lain just below the surface of the earth since one cold winter's day in 1866. Possibly it was lofted on its mission of death by a warrior of Red Cloud's band. These Indians quickly and effectively ambushed Captain William Fetterman and his detachment of troops who had been sent out from Fort Phil Kearny to drive off what was supposed to have been a small marauding band.

Turning this little piece of metal over and over in my hand, I sat down upon the bank of a dry wash which I had been exploring to muse over certain questions that came crowding into my mind—such as how many arrows penetrated a body and to what depth? In what way did army surgeons treat arrow wounds? I resolved to find the answers to what warfare was like in the days when death rode on feathered shafts.

OFFICERS who served on the Plains frequently said that it was not uncommon for an Indian to send an arrow through the body of a horse or bison provided it entered between the ribs and did not hit any bones on the opposite side of penetration.

Army surgeon J. H. Bill remarked that it was exceptional to find a single arrow wound on a victim's body, that if one arrow took effect it was immediately followed by two or more, and they came with great force and rapidity. It has been estimated that the initial velocity of discharged arrows equaled that of a musket ball fired from weapons in common use during the Indian Wars. From a short distance an arrow will pierce the larger bones without shattering them, perhaps causing only a slight crack.

Bearing mute testimony to the lethal effects of a large number of arrows discharged into a person's body is Private C. Quesville of Co. C, 13th Infantry, who on a warm spring day in May 1868, received seven deadly shafts in his body. Nat Crabtree, a civilian, while searching for cattle near Camp Cooke, Montana Territory, may not have found his cattle, but the surgeons found nine arrows in various parts of his body. It is not known from what distance the arrows were discharged but one in his buttocks penetrated to a depth of ten and a half inches.

Eight silent heralds of death pierced the body of Trooper Osborne, Troop D, 2d Nebraska Cavalry. To give an idea of the size of some arrowheads, one from Osborne's body measured four and one-half inches in length with a base of one inch. This particular arrowhead had been deeply imbedded in the victim's throat, lying alongside the trachea and esophagus.

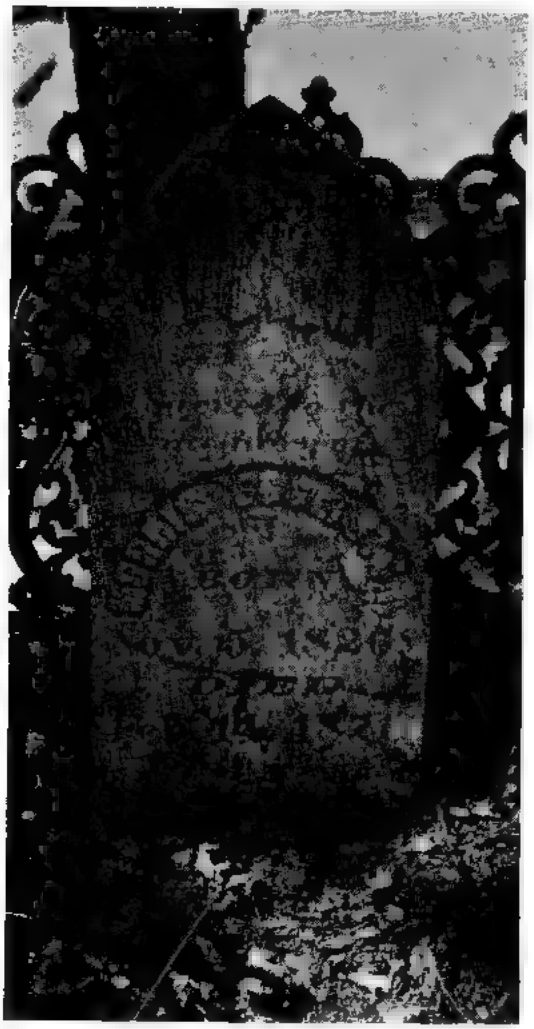
Reports of the United States Army surgeons are replete with incidents detailing the unusual depth of penetration and the large number of arrow wounds found on the bodies of victims. The back, shoulders, loins, chest, stomach, throat, private parts, hips, thighs and even eyes were fair targets.

Surgeon Bill wrote that the Indians were well aware of the serious consequences of abdominal wounds and would therefore always aim at the navel. To thwart this, Mexican soldiers and herders often wrapped a blanket several times about their abdomens for protection when fighting Indians.

Apparently Private James Spellman, Troop B, 7th Cavalry hadn't heard about the Mexican blanket trick. While herding horses Spellman was attacked by a small Kiowa raiding party, and traded five horses for five arrows. One arrow went into his right shoulder, one his right side; the third penetrated his abdominal cavity to a depth of eight inches.

(Continued on page 43)

GRASS-GROWN STREETS IN SIERRA NEVADA



Part II: North San Juan, Rough and Ready, Pilot Hill and Lotus

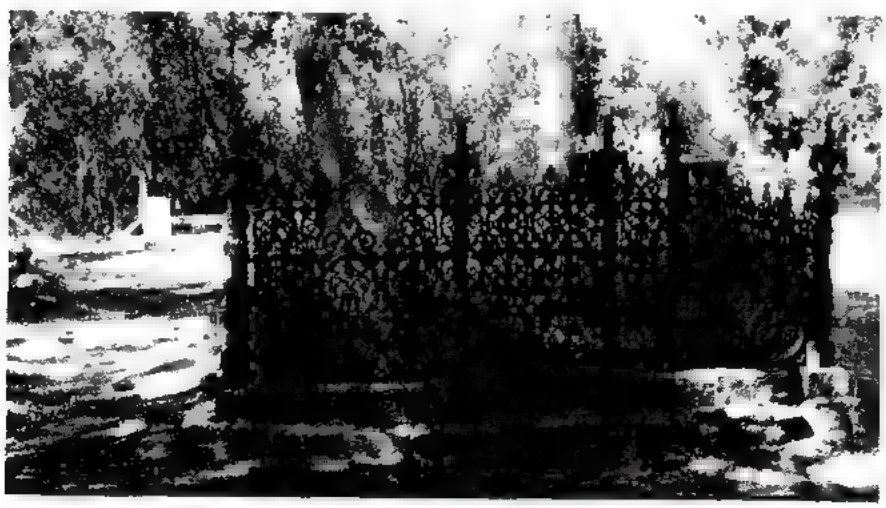
ONE should never visit ghost towns on a blustery fall day, with low clouds scudding across a dismal sky. But I found myself on the road from Camptonville to North San Juan and there was no turning back. It's a strange road; sometimes a recently logged area, strewn with fresh, aromatic slash, will abruptly give way to the bleakness of a long abandoned mining field, undulating with weedy hummocks of gangue —then in the wink of an eye, a somber tunnel of overspreading trees where blue shadows stretch around you, and chill damp contrasts with infrequent patches of sunny sky. Such a shady way winds down gently to the Middle Yuba, then continues at a slight upgrade to North San Juan's straggly outskirts.

This old camp was originally named San Juan by Mexican War veterans turned miners, who saw a resemblance between the terrain and that surrounding San Juan Prison in Mexico. "North" was added by the Post Office Department when mail service was officially established in 1857, but even today the original name is used more often than not.

Much of San Juan's early architecture and natural beauty has resisted the defacing hand of progress. This fact is best reflected by the old town hall, the Masonic Hall, a venerable store building—red brick with a lacy, wrought-iron balcony—and an ancient cemetery which is well-kept, dignified, and serene beyond comparison.

Time was when San Juan's volunteer band gave evening concerts from the graceful balcony, community togetherness was the way of life, and couples promenaded arm-in-arm along the streets. But that was a century ago, when the Golden State was young and fortunes were hacked from rocks or sifted from the Yuba. Today the hills are silent, the streams undisturbed, and night-streets are dark and lonely.

The cemetery hugs the town's south-



Markers in the Uniontown Cemetery at Lotus (above and below) bear names long forgotten by most. The old general store at Lotus (below, right) was built back in 1859 by Adam Lohry.

By TOM BARKDULL

Photos Courtesy Author

erly outskirts. I spotted it on my left as I drove out of town—turned left onto a dirt road that led me through open gates and into the dusky sanctum beyond. As I stepped out on the spongy turf, a canyon wind snarled down from the hills, thundered among moss-green headstones and caused me to tug my jacket collar closer around my throat. I walked slowly—bent into the gale—paused to read a dim engraving.

How anachronous are these hoary graveyards which sprawl adjacent to—yet an aeon from—California's Highway 49. And San Juan's is classic. To walk its shadowed paths will make you realize how teeming life was during the gold rush era. Lofty obelisks, a nondescript gray monument at the grave of a teen-age miner who died a boy trying to be a man, diminutive stones commemorating the brief lives of babies—truly the romance of tragedy scribed in sandstone and marble. It always astounds me to note the many travelers who pause to read these little histories of the old camps.

Twelve miles south of San Juan, the mining town of Grass Valley—storied, but too modern for ghost-towners—bustles amid the sophistry of pseudo-urbanity. If any of the original brick structures of Grass Valley remain, they're hidden behind stucco facades, and if any of the mountain streams sing at all, they sing far below the pavement, among the sewers. So I mention the town only because it marks the intersection with Highway 20 which runs west through Rough and Ready, only four pleasant miles away.

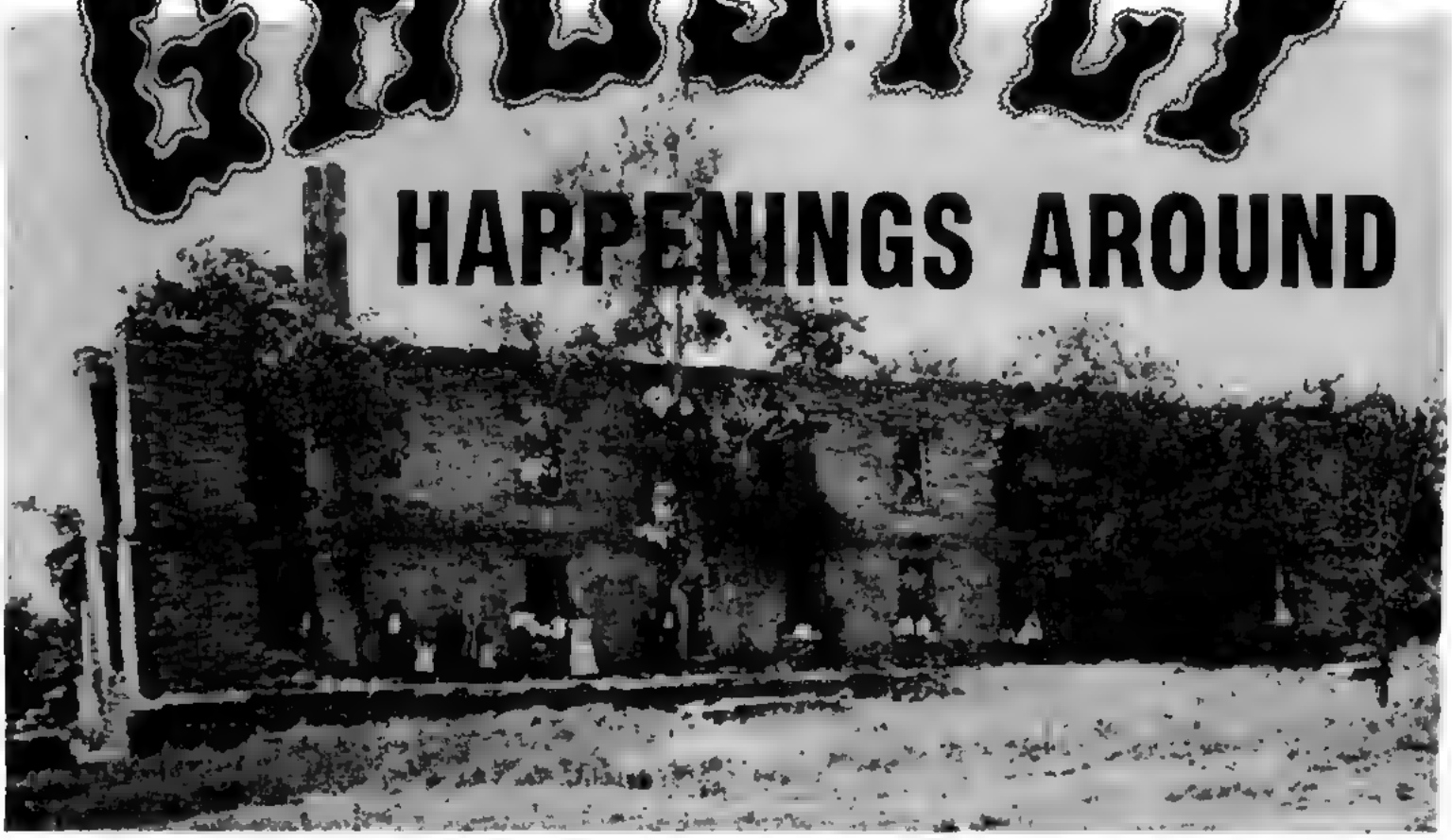
IN February 1849, Captain A. A. Townsend led a company of Mexican War veterans into the lush little valley which

(Continued on page 63)

Historic Bayley House just north of Pilot Hill still retains some of its early splendor. Below, on Rough and Ready's main street are the remains of the smithy where Lotta Crabtree danced on an anvil for the miners, her first public performance.

On the main street of North San Juan, crumbling buildings slowly weather away. Back in San Juan's heyday evening band concerts were presented from the balcony shown here.

GHOSTLY HAPPENINGS AROUND OLD FORT WASHI



Courtesy Oklahoma Historical Society

The ruins of Fort Washita, the scene of strange events for many years.

Susanne Meador and her sister Laura.

"THE CROPS had been laid by when on a Sunday in 1891 Pa decided to take us kids down to old Fort Washita," Susanne Meador wrote in her journal. "We were nearing there in the late afternoon when a one-horse buggy came running wildly up the Denison road. It bounced almost over after striking a large rock on the road side. The two men in it, Charley Colbert and Jim Yarber, were thrown out but Pa and Sid King stopped our wagon and succeeded in catching the run-away horse. The two men were not badly hurt but Charley said, 'We sure thought our time had come when we saw the two angels floating around in the air.'"

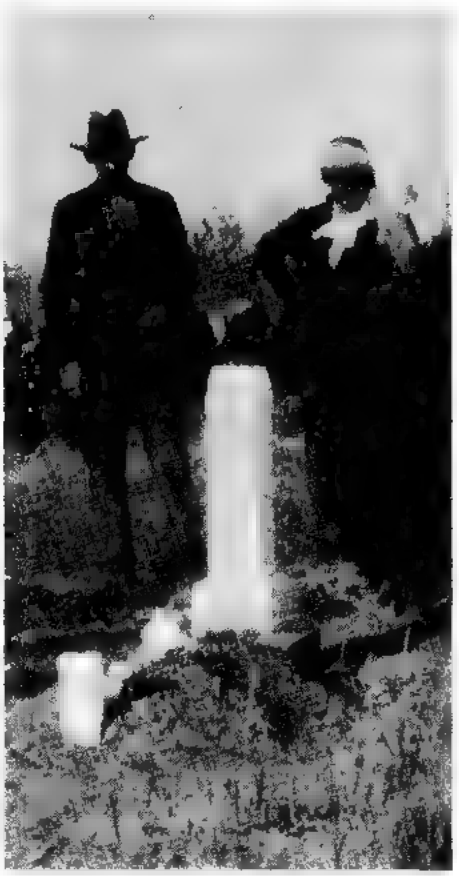
He made reference to the several ghosts allegedly haunting the ruins of once famous frontier Fort Washita on the river of the same name in Bryan County, Indian Territory.

According to Colbert and Yarber they

By CHARLES McADAMS
Photos Courtesy Author

The apparitions did not seem bent on mischief nor intent on avenging the misfortunes each had suffered in life. Nevertheless, they unnerved a community and were blamed for many fatal accidents

TA



Sid King and Susanne at her sister's grave. Sid helped Charley Colbert and friend after the runaway.

Charley Colbert shortly before his death.

saw two grayish-white beings walking out of the ruins toward the Denison (Texas) road which they were on! It was originally called the Marcy Trail. Their buggy horse promptly took fright, ran away and spilled them out.

The badly shaken Colbert and Yarber went their way. The Meador family, consisting of the parents and three children, drove on to Fort Washita somewhat warily. Camp was made across the road from the ruins. Next day the ground was examined for tracks of someone walking out toward the road. None was found. The Meador family looked over the old ruins, and visited the soldiers' cemetery close by. They found nothing alarming in the bright sunlight.

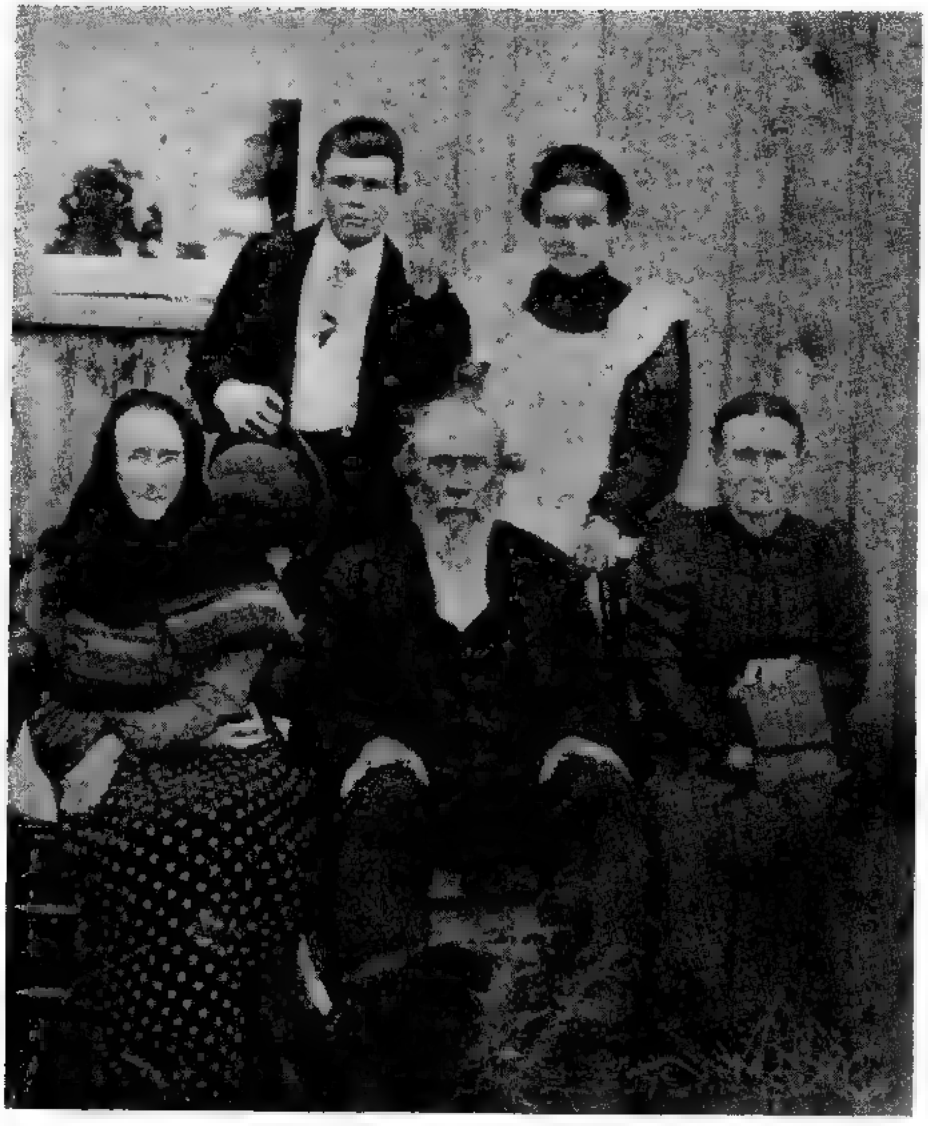
Susanne described the buildings containing numerous fireplaces and wrote that large oak trees were growing inside several of them. On the return to their farm on Twelve Mile Prairie they discussed the ghosts which hovered about the old fort. They believed each story was true, for a number of Choctaw Indians whom they knew well had observed the wraiths in recent months.

Fort Washita was established in 1842 by General Zachary Taylor, later President of the United States. One of several along the Washita River, it was designed to protect the Chickasaw and Choctaw Indians from depredations by wild Plains tribes. A trail was laid out by Captain R. B. Marcy and named for him. Fort Washita became a general meeting place and lay-over for immigrants bound to Texas or California.

The fort was garrisoned by regular U. S. Army troops until it was abandoned May 1, 1861, on the approach of Confederate forces. Thereafter it was occupied by the Rebels intermittently until near the end of the civil war.

THE SEVERAL legends connected with Fort Washita are somewhat without a beginning but with a very definite end. The oldest of the stories has a human head floating around in the air seeking its owner. When it first appeared is not known. The tragedy bringing it about might have occurred before the Civil War or during it. Whether the lieutenants concerned were regulars of the U. S. Army or from the Confederate forces is a mystery. In any event, so the story goes, a lieutenant with a beautiful wife was stationed at the fort. She was a flirt and inclined to stray when an opportunity was afforded. Finally she became enamoured of another young lieutenant.

Learning of the circumstances the husband concluded to bide his time patiently until something definite developed. Going to the commanding officer, he discussed the situation with him. His superior could think of no solution except transferring one or the other of the lieutenants. The husband decided that since



Standing, Susanne and her brother Charley. Her father (center) and mother (far right), Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Meador. Elderly woman on far left not identified.

rumors were going around of his wife's infidelity, it would be better for him to transfer and he so requested. But before approval could be authorized, the wife and her lover completed plans to flee, he intending to desert.

While all this hung in the balance the husband went out on a scouting detail as officer in charge. Late one night he returned prematurely and found the other lieutenant in his own quarters. During the ensuing struggle the lieutenant ran the point of his sword through the wife-stealer's throat. As the victim fell, bleeding to death, the lieutenant cut off his head, carried it to the river and threw it in. It was never found.

On his return from this grisly errand he found the officer of the day with a detail removing the headless corpse. His wife, in fear of being killed also, had sought refuge in the quarters of a captain and his wife.

Although the scandal ending in murder was hushed up or settled, strange occurrences were observed around the fort soon after the lieutenant and his wife were gone. An Irish sergeant in charge of stables rushed to his company commander one morning and reported he had seen the dead lieutenant's head floating around in the air. The features were perfectly recognizable and the lieutenant supposedly said something to him. Just what, the sergeant could not recall for he was too badly rattled to remember.

Within a short time other soldiers reported seeing the missing head, usually in the dusk or in early morning mists rising off the river. According to them it came from that direction and could be seen floating back toward it.

On seeing the frightening head a second and third time the sergeant's nerves cracked. He requested a transfer elsewhere but was not only ridiculed for being superstitious but was refused. The result—he went to the enlisted men's barracks and shot himself dead with a revolver.

THE GHOSTS of two women began appearing around 1855. Both in life had come to grief at Fort Washita. The first was a young girl of nineteen who reached there in a wagontrain headed for California from Illinois.

Traveling in the same train was a former ardent suitor from her hometown. When, after a courtship of two years she refused to get married, he turned to another girl. The young couple had a two-months-old baby boy when they started west with her family. During the slow journey to Fort Washita the bridegroom's fervor for his first love flamed again. The girl avoided him, but while the immigrants rested over at Fort Washita he managed to confront her alone.

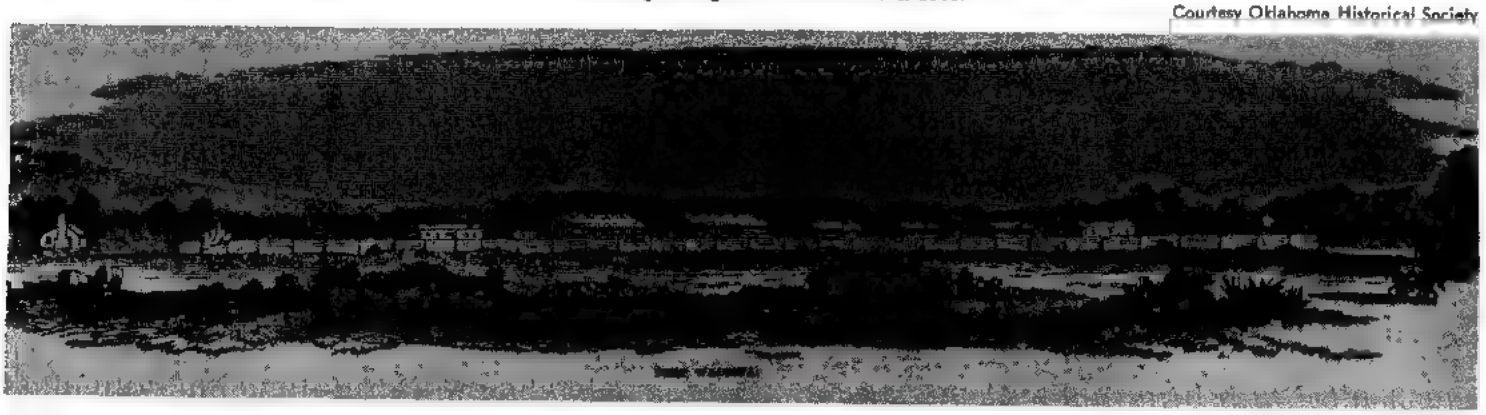
At sundown she walked away from the river camp below the fort into the timber. Having no idea she was being secretly followed, the girl was badly frightened when the young man suddenly caught up with her on the bank. He stated that his love for her was greater than before and insisted that they leave the train together. Indignant, the girl refused his advances, pointing out that he was a married man with a family.

Suddenly, so the story goes, he grabbed her by the throat exclaiming that if he couldn't have her no one else

(Continued on page 48)

An engraving of Fort Washita in 1861.

Courtesy Oklahoma Historical Society



BARREN VICTORY OF THE STALLION HUNTERS

This is a story of madness—and not just the rabies kind!

By NONA TRAPP

Photo Courtesy Author

Illustration by Charles Clayton

IT shall be unlawful for any person to maintain or keep a dog more than six (6) months of age on any premises within the corporate limits of the City of Cleveland unless such dog wears a collar or harness securely attached to its body to which shall be securely attached a tag issued for said dog by a licensed veterinarian, licensed to practice veterinary medicine in the State of Texas, showing that the dog has been, within the current calendar year, vaccinated against rabies . . . ."

This law was passed too late to save the most beautiful wild horse I ever saw. It was 1921 and I was fourteen years old. Our family was very large. There were fourteen children, nine boys and five girls. I was the youngest girl.

Dad taught all of us to do our share of work. By the time I was twelve I was picking a bale of cotton a week, and that was fifteen or sixteen hundred pounds. When we went in home from the fields and had beans for supper, we ate and asked no questions. Later we went out to feed the stock and milk the cows. There were eight children at home; my oldest brothers were away, some were married, and my oldest sister had married.

Dad bought twenty-two acres of land a mile east of Cleveland. It had a two-room house with pine trees all around it. There was so much pine straw on the roof Dad was scared it might catch fire and burn, so he put me on the house to sweep it off.

In the spring we children picked berries. The woods were full of them. We made pies or Mother would can them. One beautiful day we went to pick berries. The yellow jasmine was in full bloom and the ground was a carpet of blue and purple violets. Dogwood, wild peach, Mayhaws and black haws were blooming. The spring perfume of the woods is something I will never forget. A good mile from our house the berries were so thick we could pick for an hour and have all our pails full. We carried a large stick all the time so if we saw a snake, we could kill it. And there were all kinds.

We were picking; my sisters Nora and Ethel and I. All was quiet except for

(Continued on page 64)

The wild horse hunt 48 years ago in Cleveland, Texas is pictured above as the riders took a breather and posed for Pennis Whitmire's camera. From left to right: Bud Thompson, Marlin Thompson, O. Cruse, Jim Collier, Marsian Brinkley, Mr. Trapp (author's father), and V. E. Foster.

PRISON BREAK! Those who were warned were terrified; those who weren't warned should never have answered the knock at their door!

100

Outside view of the penitentiary chapel

Charles Morley

The official prison "mug sho

IT IS 2:15 in the afternoon on a wild stormy day—the hour at which a hundred hours of terror are about to begin ders and bloodshed, kidnapping and ark fear of madmen running loose ly overhead.

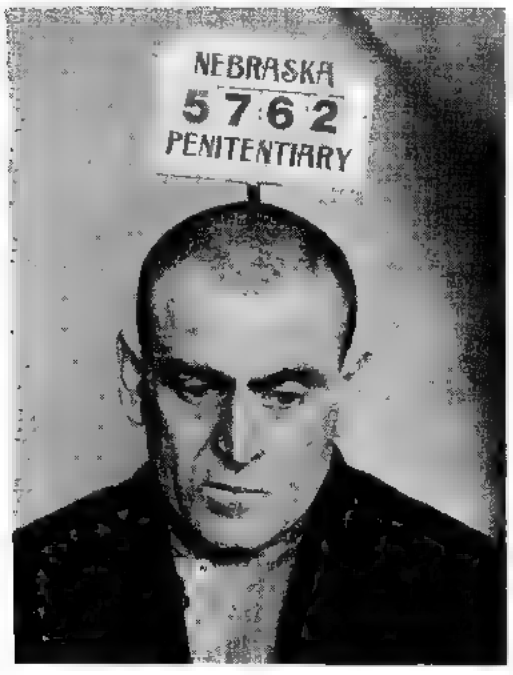
pistol and

8s. The man with the cious schemer and a hyp He's too untrustworthy even to hav cellmate. He's also one of the t nfeblowers of the men with th of murder (he fighting it out with a U. also he's a two-time loser in robbery. Th other with the .38 is a young, "bank blower" who thinks he is as they come. The three ar (actually Charles Taylor), for eran convict; Charles Morley, th

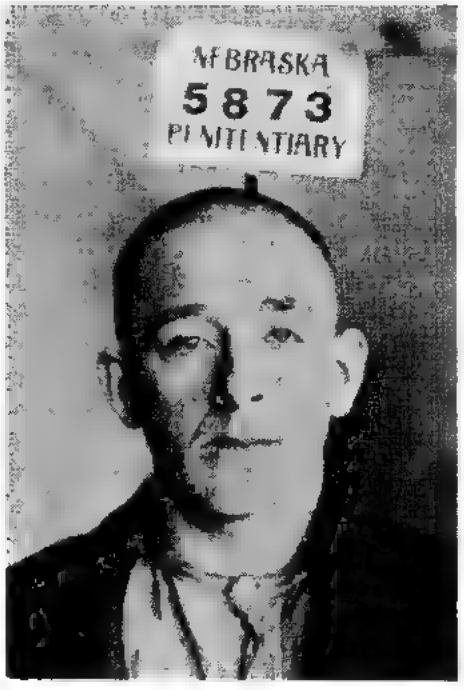
HOURS OF Terror

By K. D. CURTIS

Photos Courtesy Author



Charles Taylor, alias Shorty Gray



John Dowd

of the escapees. Courtesy Nebraska Penal and Correctional Complex Lincoln

often jailed, and whom I interviewed; and John Dowd, twenty-eight, also experienced in crime. All on this day were doing time in the Nebraska state penitentiary in Lincoln.

No one will believe their story of how these guns, plus ammunition and safe-blowing ingredients, were smuggled into the penitentiary. But it proves Gray's boast that he had powerful, unbelievable connections on the outside.

"Shorty got a minister who, with an ex-con living in Lincoln, hustled the guns, ammunition, nitroglycerine and soap,"—this is Morley telling me the story—"and bribed an off-duty guard to go over the south wall with ropes between midnight and two in the morning. Inside help assisted us in hiding the stuff in Broom Shop No. 1 where we all worked."

"This must have cost Gray a pretty penny?"

"Not a cent in cash. The man was loved —and feared—that much." Morley's face turned away from me as he finished.

NOW THE THREE men have somehow sneaked away from their broom shop work-detail and are moving cat-like across the prison yard toward the chapel, located near the main gate passageway. Approaching the convicts' church, they all raise their hands above their heads. This is required for cons when nearing the chapel entrance.

Suddenly, their hands go to their secreted guns. Jim Thomas, Negro trusty who mans the cigar counter, appears at the chapel entrance.

"Hi, men," he greets them. "Where you all going?"

"Shut up, Jim," snaps Gray, "or we'll blow you apart!" He jams the .45 toward him. "We're crashing the main gate. Keep your hands down and open. And come with us."

With Thomas, the three footpad their way into the chapel area and head toward the connecting, open door which leads to the office of Deputy Warden Henry Wagner. (Morley says the original plot called for him to waylay and hold Wagner captive after his return from lunch.)

The deputy warden looks up from his busy desk into three brandishing guns and explodes: "What goes on here?" He makes a swift pass toward a desk drawer. Allegedly Charles Morley does the answering. Three .38 blasts echo off the chapel walls. Three bullets lodge in Wagner's chest. The first murder is committed.

Morley covers the trusty while Gray and Dowd slip through a barred, but for some reason unlocked, door into the main-gate passageway which is blocked by a series of two barred doors with a turnkey between them.

Apparently no turnkey sees Shorty Gray, with a top-expert's quick skill, stuff a safeblower's mix of nitroglycerine and soap into the big lock. When the lock blows, the blast sends steel parts ricocheting all over the place. The noise is deafening.

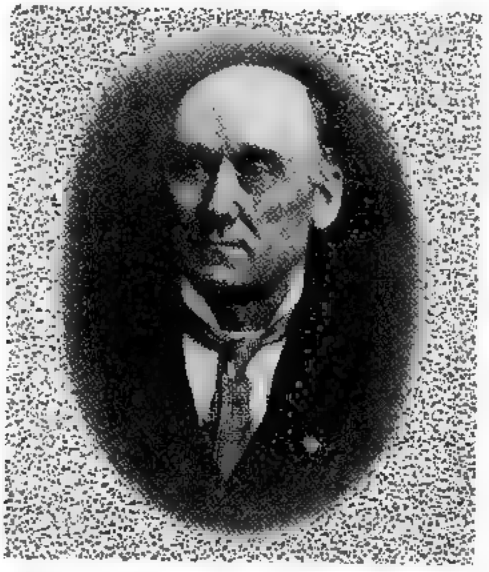
Now Claus Pahl, turnkey, is looking into the barrel of Dowd's .38.

"Toss us the main keys—or die!" snaps young Dowd. Pahl hesitates. "Move!" seconds Gray, still tearing away at the gate, which presently gives way.

Some say a voice yells at Pahl to heave the keys through the other side of the remaining barred gates, which would have stalled the escape until Gray could blow the second set of locks. Maybe this is imagination. But Pahl is human and knowing the reputation of the men, tosses the keys toward Gray, and when the desperadoes stoop to retrieve them, the turnkey plunges through a connecting door leading to a cellar-storage. Possibly this saves another murder.

The fearsome reverberation of Morley's three shots in the chapel have alerted the prison staff. Near the area are the offices of Warden James Delahunty, staff personnel, ushers and others. Cellblock keepers are nearby, too. West Cellblock Guard, Thomas Doody, comes plunging into the south chapel door. Morley having slain Wagner, whirls on Doody, orders the guard to toss over his gun and raise his hands. Doody answers boldly—in quick gunfire. He leaps behind a steel pillar for scant cover. Morley shoots away at him. Doody drops to the floor, intending to take a fast flip toward a protective corner. But as he drops, Morley's bullet severs a left leg artery. Another burst strikes Doody in the body. Doody, resourceful, manages to drag himself out of

The dairy-delivery wagon used in the getaway was similar to any one in the Roberts' dairy fleet shown here.



Warden James Delahunty (above) met his death along with deputy warden Henry Wagner and usher E. G. Heilman as a result of the escape.

Inside view of the chapel.

Photos Courtesy Nebraska State Historical Society

pistol range, and is saved by first-aid treatment given by a trusty.

At the moment Doody's blood begins to flow, Walter Wilson, clerk, unaware of the events, moves out of the warden's office toward Deputy Warden Wagner's quarters where he has a post-lunch appointment.

"Just then, I hear six pistol shots," remembers Wilson in his letters. " I saw Pahl crouching on the floor, crazed with fright. Then Usher E. G. Heilman comes staggering into the warden's office, collapses on the floor, and is discovered to be seriously wounded. Dowd, while guarding Gray's work on the locks, has fired on Heilman fatally.

"Chief Clerk Ward and I lift Heilman carefully into an office chair. Then the chief clerk plunges into his office safe-depository, and pulls the door to. Steward Robb, also unarmed, successfully conceals himself in his office. That leaves only myself and Warden Delahunty in the office suite."

WARDEN DELAHUNTY, brave and popular and known as "Square Jim" to his men both in cells and out, seizes a revolver and moves quickly to the door facing the main entranceway. Wilson follows him, facing death.

"Drop your guns, men, or I'll have to kill you!" shouts the warden at Gray and Dowd.

In reply, the cons blue the air with their cursing. They begin blasting away at the warden's doorway. Delahunty fires five times at the desperadoes. And the desperadoes shoot back. They rip the casing from the warden's door, around which he is trying to see. In firing a fourth bold shot, Delahunty leans a trifle too far out, and a bullet—thought to be Dowd's—catches the warden in his side. Blood flows quickly. Suddenly Delahunty collapses. As he sinks to the floor, he shoots again and almost gets Gray.

"Alone I managed to drag the warden back into our office," says Wilson.

Just then, John Delahunty, the warden's brother and the prison's yardmaster, comes bursting into the office to investigate the uproar. At the sight of his brother, the warden gasps, "I'm dying, John. Here—take my gun. Stop this escape!"

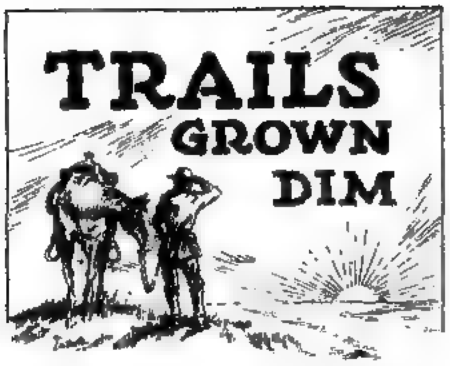
Outside the office, there is the frantic sound of stampeding feet, of wild yelling and raw profanity.

"They've thrown open the gates with the keys!" Wilson stammers to the yardmaster. "The whole pen is wide open!"

As three fleeing figures dash by, a hand is poked into the warden's office and a pistol blast tears down a calendar in a shot obviously intended for the office's last man—Wilson.

John Delahunty grabs his dying brother's gun and dashes into the entranceway to fire at the fugitives, and to get the one undamaged set of barred doors slammed shut and locked before a wholesale prison delivery takes place. In a moment Turnkey Pahl joins him. Now Chief Clerk Ward emerges from his bastion—the big office safe—and Steward Robbs comes out of his office hideaway. Night Guard Evans, two office trusties, the prison physician and others come running to

(Continued on page 58)



Readers' letters for "Trails Grown Dim" are printed as soon as space permits, so please be patient! If possible, please type your query; or if handwritten, print or write clearly, especially names, dates, and places—and most of all, please be brief. In accord with the content of our magazines and purpose of this service since its beginning, preference is given writers whose trails have grown dim out West: lost ancestors and relatives who were sheriffs, pioneers, Forty-niners, muleskinners, cowboys, Indians and Indian fighters, and so on. We can't run current "missing persons" notices or lengthy genealogical requests, but we do attempt to print all letters as soon as we can. Any reader having information concerning persons referred to below is asked to communicate directly with the letter writer; please do not write us.

John V. Rape

I would like to contact T/Sgt. John V. Rape, whose letter appeared in FRONTIER TIMES (November 1969). I have information he may desire.—Nelda Kimberling Schuyler, 6636 S. E. 92nd Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97266

Stranberg-West

Do any of your readers, especially the old-timers in northwest Montana where the old Circle C Ranch was located, recall my father? He broke horses for a ranch or two there, I believe one of them being the Circle C. At this time, probably 1892 or thereabout, they paid a cowboy $10 a head to break a good saddle horse.

My father was John West. He had an alias or two; his real name was Johnny Stranberg. He was sometimes called Montana Jack.

If any of the old-timers can send me any information or anything that would be of interest while he worked on these ranches, it will be very much appreciated, as I may have a book written of his days as a cowboy in Montana. He would be ninety-three years old now. He died in 1942.—Mrs. Bernice Klein, Box 335, Belt, Montana 59412

Walter Walsh

Any information regarding the life of Walter Walsh, born in Charleston, South Carolina in 1884, would be greatly appreciated. He died at Goldfield, Nevada, October 15, 1917. He left Charleston as a young man and came west. He was supposed to have been a miner and a veterinarian at various times. His occupation given on the death certificate was that of bartender. Interment was in the Eagles' burial ground at Goldfield, Nevada. Perhaps some old-timer from Goldfield could tell me what happened to the Eagles' burial plot at the Goldfield Cemetery. On two visits to Goldfield, we were unable to locate it and could obtain no information except that maybe the graves were moved.—Walter Walsh Tolley, 7810 Mt. Diablo Court, Fair Oaks, California 95628

Laird and Sanchez

I am in need of any information I can obtain on two men, Laird and Sanchez. They made the first cattle drive from the vicinity of Laredo, Texas to Springfield, Missouri in 1860-61 via Fort Worth, Doans Crossing on the Red River, and returned down the same trail.—T. W. Clark, 1215 Wintergreen Road, Lancaster, Texas 75146

"Old Major" Speer

My great-grandfather came to Collin County, Texas from Arkansas in the early 1850s. He was called "Old Major" Speer. To date I have not been able to determine why he was so called or what his first names or initials were. Any information about him or his son, John Frank Speer Sr., will be appreciated.—John E. Speer, Route 1, Box 276, Amarillo, Texas 79106

Coleman

I would like to learn of my husband's people. Mr. Coleman died in 1888 at Danville, Kansas. He had twelve brothers. My husband said his father had gone to California with an older brother when he was only nine years old. They went by mule-drawn freight wagons. One brother was killed by Indians. Another brother, Nathaniel Coleman settled near The Dalles on the Columbia. Would like very much to get in touch with some of his family. They came out from Illinois around Mattoon.—Laura E. Coleman, Box 207, Pinedale, Wyoming 82941

Henry Redhair

My great-uncle Henry Redhair was last heard of when he was in Chickasha, Oklahoma in September 1910 at a funeral of a sister, Mary Jane Anderson, the widow of a Major Anderson. After the funeral my uncle went back to New Mexico. He was reared near Braymer, Missouri, leaving in the 1890s and serving in the Spanish-American War. I don't know if he has any children or if he has ever married but would appreciate hearing from someone who knew of him.—John E. Feil, Route 1, Cowgill, Missouri 64637

James Allen Nicholson

James Allen Nicholson, born Crawfordsville, Indiana (1841-1909) married Mathilda Jane Caldwell (1846-1900) born in Missouri. They had two sons, Clarence Malcomb Nicholson (1869-1930) and Louis Edward Nicholson (1875-1914), both born in St. Joseph, Missouri. The family then moved to Rocky Bar, Idaho. At least they were there in 1892.

James Nicholson had three brothers, William, Thomas and Joe (killed in a snowslide at Rocky Bar in 1892) and a sister, Mary Nicholson Bonhan. James was representative from Elmore County, Idaho in 1898 and later probate judge when the county seat was changed from the mining town of Rocky Bar to Mountain Home, a town which had grown on the desert when the railroad came through Idaho.

Clarence Nicholson was sheriff about 1900 in Elmore County and later a law officer in Boise until he died. Ed Nicholson was deputy recorder for a time in Elmore County. I would like information about the parents and family of James Allen Nicholson and would like to correspond with any descendants of his brothers' and sister's families. I believe they were in Montana and Canada.—Mrs. Raleigh Smith, Box 538, Mountain Home, Idaho 83647

Frank Gardiner of Australia

I would like to know what happened to one of Australia's most famous bushrangers, Frank Gardiner, after his exile to the U. S. in 1874 and thought some of your readers may be able to help. Nothing certain seems to be known about him after 1879 when he took over a saloon at 318 Brannan Street, San Francisco. He supposedly married at this time, and later had two sons. Legend has it that he was shot dead in a poker game somewhere in Colorado in 1903.—P. H. McCarthy, School of Veterinary Science, University of Queensland, St. Lucia, Brisbane 4067, Queensland, Australia

Ruble-Sarsfield-Brekke

I am trying to locate a dear friend of mine with whom I have lost touch over the years. She is Margaret Ruble, mother of Barbara Wood and the aunt of Sonny Sarsfield and Galen Brekke. I last heard from her in Forsythe, Montana. She may be married again. The last two are from Montana originally. I would love to hear from any of them.—Mrs. Robert Rader, Box 1161, Farmington, New Mexico 87401

Howe

As my people were pioneers, I have been fascinated by your magazine. I wonder if your readers could help me find the given name of my great-grandfather Howe, a sea captain who drowned on Lake Champlain in a big storm. Evidently he went down with the ship. According to my information his children were William (my grandfather), born 1814 in Vermont; C. C. Howe, born in New York and married Hannah Price and had a daughter Julia Ward Howe; Sanford, a son who lived at Rockford, Illinois; and Nanie A., who married Lucas.

William Horace was a son who married and had sons Horace Greely and George Howe. William Howe married Ella Stewart. They had Albert, born about 1840; Sarah, born 1842 at Rockford, Illinois; and Theodore, born 1853 in Illinois. Probably there were others. After Ella's death, William married Mary E. Haydn Cleveland who had one child, Maria. They had Clarabelle, born 1864; Frederick, born 1872 in Bourbon County, Kansas; Rosie, born about 1877. William Howe died of cancer about 1884 to 1889 in central Kansas at the home of his son Theodore. What county? Who

(Continued on page 48)

Cane Hill in the Ozarks was old when the Civil War was new...

Above are the remains of the mill at Cane Hill. The Washington County Historical Society marker (inset) gives interested parties its history. The damaged marker in front of the mill has been replaced since this photo was taken.

Where the Mills Turned

By C. L. PACKER

THOUSANDS of artifacts found by early settlers and today's residents of the Cane Hill area point to the Stone-age Dwellers. Evidence of DeSoto and his associates were remains of an old rock fort, part of which was standing on what was once the White McClellen place near the present town. The stone walls were part of a square which enclosed some fine springs of clear, cold water. Big rock basins of different shapes were found here and there around the fort. These are thought to have been hacked out by the Spanish. A coin found on a nearby farm was further proof.

Legend says Indians used the fort for a council house after the Spaniards departed. In 1859 a settler found many arrowheads; also an old ax and some relics left by the DeSoto party. Up to the time of the Civil War the entrenchments of the fort were still visible.

Soon after the Revolutionary War an emigrant train of 156 wagons halted in the Cumberland country in the vicinity of the Kentucky-Tennessee line. Shortly after the turn of the nineteenth century many families from this settlement headed west and settled along the Arkansas River, some at the post called Petite Roche (present Little Rock), others thirteen miles upstream where they built log cabins and called the place Crystal Hill.

Home-seekers came in keelboats, bringing household articles, farming tools and a few animals with them. Other settlers traveled overland on horseback, with [illegible] loaded pack horses and herding [illegible]ock along the narrow trails. A few adventuresome settlers continued up the river to Fort Smith and present Van Buren where they joined up with overland parties who had crossed the Mississippi on ferry boats.

One of the first settlers of Crystal Hill was Rev. John Carnahan, a Presbyterian who arrived in 1811 and the next year preached what is said to be the first Protestant sermon ever delivered in Arkansas. Another of the earliest settlers was Jacob Pyeatte who said, "I'll never forget the feeling I had when I left my home in France with practically everything I owned being my clothes on my back."

When Jacob built his house in Crystal Hill another French settler told him it was located too near the water and that floods might sweep it away. Since it didn't seem to him too close and the bottomland was very rich he never worried much and besides he knew good crops couldn't help but grow in such fertile fields.

But floods did come. Settlers lost houses. Good trees for building new ones were all around so more houses were built. Then more floods took more houses.

Mary Pyeatte was born in this house in 1885. It is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Britton. The house is over 100 years old.

After a while many lowlanders began to yearn for higher ground, safe from floods and where there would be springs to supply better drinking water.

RIGHT OFF, the Crystal Hillers made preparations to settle the lands recently vacated by the Cherokees. Some went upriver by keelboats to the vicinity of Fort Smith. Others traveled on horseback—often a mother with a babe in her lap and another small child behind, clinging tightly to keep from falling off. Some of the pack animals had big spinning wheels roped to their sides and other articles stacked high on their backs. Small sacks of garden seeds were crammed in among other bundles. There were no roads leading into the back country and no wagons were with these first parties.

On the settlers pushed, following trails made by foxes, wolves, bears, deer and elk—some worn deeper by buffaloes on the eastern fringe of the vast herds pushing south to escape winter blasts. Wise buffaloes had found the Ozark meadows long before the settlers came, and spent the cold months there.

Like the buffaloes, many home-seekers stopped when they found the lush meadows. They cut the tall trees on the slopes and built their cabins. Some preferred to live on higher ground nearer springs. Blackberries, plums, strawberries, grapes, gooseberries, papaws, persimmons and haws were plentiful. Deer, elk, bears, rabbits, squirrels, quail, wild turkeys, ducks and geese were there for the shooting. Bees made honey, and sugar maples supplied sap for settlers to boil. Fine timber and sandstone furnished building material. Yes, the Crystal Hillers had at last found their Utopia, later to be called Cane Hill.

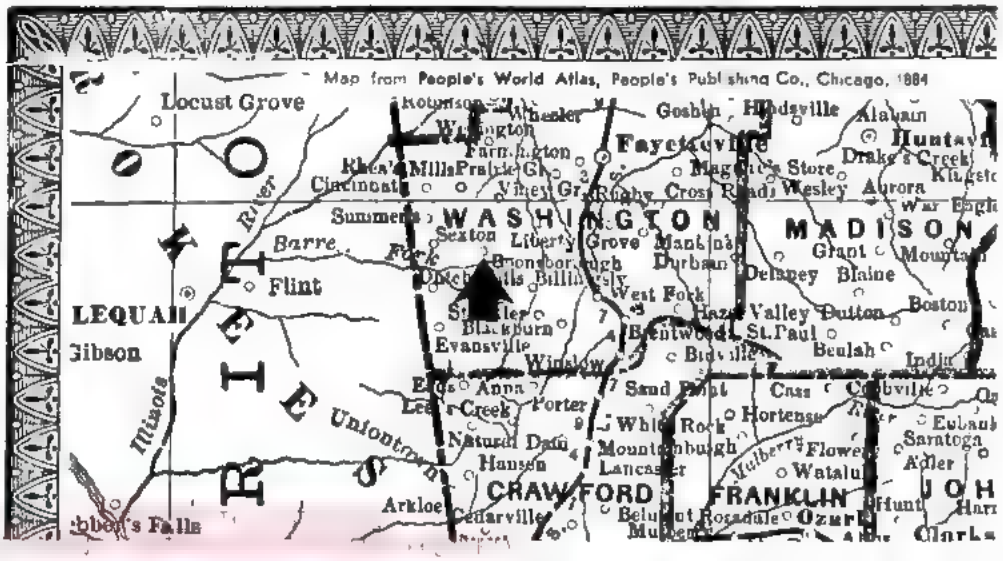
There were fine craftsmen of many trades among those early settlers—blacksmiths, stonemasons, carpenters, cabinet makers and gunsmiths. Jacob Pyeatte and his brothers were skilled bell makers. Grazing cattle wore bells made by these men. One of the Pyeattes had a small son who wore a bell attached to a cord around his neck when he played outside the house—this so he could be quickly located should Indians come. The authority for this statement is Jacob's great-granddaughter, Miss Mary Pyeatte, now living in Cane Hill where she has spent most of her life. Mary was born in a big two-story house on a hill north of town—a house over 100 years old—and presently owned by Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Britton of Tulsa, Oklahoma.

"Cane Hill was once known as Boonesboro," Miss Pyeatte told me, "because Daniel Boone came through here, but dense thickets of tall cane grew in such profusion that the name was soon changed to 'Cane Hill.' On one side of the hills north of town my grandfather built a big house—the first frame house in Washington County. About two years ago when my friend, Mrs. Carnahan, visited me she remarked, 'When I think of your grandfather he reminds me of the Holy Men of old.'

"This country was a fine country for settlers. Good water is very important and we always have had plenty of it around here. When I was growing up there were 300 fine springs within a radius of one mile."

Where grain was raised, mills were bound to be built. The Cane Hill area had its share. Peter Pyeatte built the first water mill. As soon as he had fin-

Cane Hill was once called Boonesborough, as this 1884 map indicates.



ished building his home he selected some good limestones, worked them down with hand tools and fashioned his millstones. This mill ground meal and flour for people from far and near. There were many other mills—some powered by water, some by steam.

Mary remembers the one her grandfather built near a big spring. "It was run by steam. The lower structure was of rock; the upper part, frame. Within it were a sawmill, gristmill, flourmill and a carding machine.

"In milling wheat it was first 'bolted' (sifted) through coarse cloth which removed the bran. A finer mesh cloth was used for additional bolting. There were three grades—top quality, called 'patent best'; 'germ', second grade; 'shorts', third grade. Flour was sacked in five, ten, and twenty-five pound lots. People came for flour from many points over northwest Arkansas and some from Indian Territory. I remember Indians walking from there to the mill and trading baskets they had woven. Grandfather would have preferred money in payment but he always traded for their baskets and the Indians would shoulder the sacks of flour and head back for their villages. Grandfather managed to sell the baskets to settlers."

Cane Hill was known as a *mill town*. Because of a steam mill which operated there in its early days the settlement was once called "Steam Mill."

"As soon as my father was big enough to take his place as a mill hand," Mary said, "the mill on our place became known as the Pyeatte and Son Mill. When Father's sister married William Moore, he became a partner and the name was changed to Pyeatte, Moore and Son Mill. After some time our orchards were bearing so much fruit that my father had to take over their care, so Grandfather and Mr. Moore operated the mill as Pyeatte and Moore Mill. After Grandfather died it was Moore Mill.

Miss Mary Pyeatte holds one of the several pieces of old Cane Hill pottery which she owns. They are prized by collectors today. Miss Pyeatte's home was formerly a Methodist church, used as a hospital during the Civil War. The murderers of the Wright Brothers were given a trial in this house, found guilty, and hanged on the old maple tree in front of the house.

AS ON other frontiers the lawless element eventually discovered the settlements of northwest Arkansas. Now and then some form of cussedness was committed in spite of the precautions taken by vigilant settlers to keep crime at a minimum. But the greatest tragedy to strike was the conflict known to most settlers as "The War Between the States." Musket and cannon fire shattered the quietude of the "Hills of Home."

As in other wars before and since, the young men bore the brunt of the fighting. The youth of Cane Hill—all in a group—became the first Confederate military company to organize west of the Mississippi. Some of these were teachers at Cane Hill's college. During the war, the college, schools, many businesses and many homes were burned to the ground. It was much the same over other parts of northwest Arkansas.

Hangings took place, spurred on by the blindness of violence. With all able-bodied men away, women took over the grievous task of burying victims of such crimes. A settler buried some money which belonged to a niece, his ward. Federal soldiers got wind of it and tried to make him reveal the money's hiding place. He refused. The soldiers took him and another elderly man and hanged them from the cross-bar of a high gate. A third man was hanged at a different location. After the soldiers had gone some girls drove underneath the bodies with a wagon, cut the ropes, lowered the bodies into the wagon and buried the victims.

However there were examples of brotherly love as well as hatred and distrust during this period of strife. One incident stemmed from the days of the Forty-niners and the mad rush for gold. At that time several young men from the Cane Hill community had taken off for California. On reaching "the 80-mile desert," one of them became fearful of making it across on account of lameness. He had no mount and had been walking during the long journey. One of his companions, riding a mule, said he could walk across the desert and insisted that the lame man mount the mule. All made it to California.

During the war these two men were on opposite sides. The one who had lent his mule to the other was a Confederate. It so happened that he had a chance for a brief visit home. One night some bushwhackers were on his trail, intent on killing him. A Federal soldier managed to find the intended victim and at night helped him slip through Federal lines to safety. The Good Samaritan was the one who had crossed the desert on the borrowed mule.

After the war, men returning to Cane Hill tried to forget the miseries of conflict. New homes grew over the ashes of the old. The college was rebuilt—another frame structure. More schoolhouses were built. Education seems to have always been a prime concern to the community. One record shows the first school session was held as early as 1825. Possibly some kind woman may have volunteered her services for instructing children in the vicinity, as was often the case in frontier settlements. In 1832 a log schoolhouse was built on a nearby hill, and some say this was the first.

In 1834, two years before Arkansas statehood, plans were made for a permanent school of higher education. It operated, off and on, until December 26, 1850 when it was incorporated as Cane Hill Collegiate Institute. On December 16, 1852 it was given a charter and new name, "Cane Hill College." Now a bell was needed. A steamboat had sunk in the Arkansas River off Van Buren. The captain of the steamboat heard of the new college and wrote to his friend, Rev. John Buchanan, offering him the bell. John Rankin Pyeatte hitched oxen to a cart and drove over to a point near the sunken steamboat, dragged the bell out and carted it over bumpy trails to Cane Hill.

"My grandfather who hauled the bell was probably the first to put a 'speedometer' on a wagon," Miss Pyeatte said. "It was when he drove from Cane Hill to California during the gold rush in '49. I think it was some sort of device which recorded distance—not speed."

The bell was erected and its mellow tones floated over the Arkansas hills, calling students to classes, reminding folks on Sunday, that it was time for church, and on sad occasions, tolling while funeral processions were in progress. In later years the historic bell was cracked when the building was destroyed by fire. People contributed enough money to have it sent to Ohio where it was recast and

put back in use atop a belfry specially built for it. The bell is one of Cane Hill's most prized relics of pioneer days and on special occasions its sweet tones echo those of its steamboat days on the big river.

BECAUSE most of those who lived around Cane Hill were self-respecting, peaceful people, they took precautions against renegades who might drift through. For instance, when Miss Pyeatte's grandfather built his first house he placed the windows high above the floor so that a person seated in a chair would not be visible by candlelight to any bushwhacker skulking in the darkness.

She recalled one occasion which caused some excitement. It happened when she was ten years old. One night her mother was upstairs and called, "Mary! I wish you'd come here! There's the largest lightning bug I ever saw down there around where that old tree is!"

From an upstairs window they watched a light move around till long past bedtime. Next morning an investigation revealed a hole which had been dug about three feet deep near the old dead tree. At the bottom of the hole was an imprint like some heavy object such as an iron pot containing coins might make.

"Long afterwards, maybe thirty-five or forty years ago," said Mary, "one of our men told us he had been watching something funny taking place on two successive days. Each day two men drove up in a big automobile and parked back of the spring house. They got out and walked just so far, time and again—back and forth—back and forth. On the second day Charley Moore decided to investigate. At his approach one of the men met him and said, 'We're looking for black gold.' When Charley reported this to my father he said, 'Those men looked mean. I figured it was best to leave them alone. One of them told me if they found any black gold he'd see to it that I got my share.'

"When the men failed to return the next day, Charley went back to the place they had been. A short distance from the spring house was a freshly dug hole, four feet across and about that deep. In it were the remains of an old rotted box. It has always been a mystery."

From time to time down through the years strangers have been seen hanging around the Cane Hill vicinity and prowling in the hills. Often landowners have found holes dug here and there on their premises. It is surmised some of the original digging was done by soldiers after the war who knew where the money was buried. In later years digging was done by men who followed leads they had managed to get on buried loot—like the two men in the big car at the spring house.

"Father had chickens, turkeys, geese, ducks and guineas all over the place," said Mary. "You can't find a better 'watchdog' than geese and guineas—especially guineas. No one can slip on a place where they are.

"We used to go on picnics when I was a girl—I guess long outings or fishing trips would be a better term. One favorite place was south of here at the natural rock dam on Lee's Creek. Sometimes, on such occasions, folks stayed away from their homes for as long as ten days or two weeks. We never thought of locking our house when we left. Nothing in our house was ever bothered while we were away although almost everybody in town knew when their neighbors were gone.

"Folks going on these trips went in covered wagons and carried plenty of provisions, including hams, bacon and eggs. With the fish we caught, everyone had plenty to eat. Once when we were at the dam a crowd of about 300 people with a 30-piece band from the University of Arkansas came for an outing. When the band struck up the music, people sat on the slopes and perched on rock ledges listening. Some of them probably had never heard a band before.

"Cane Hill was a bustling place. There were nine stores here. People living in the locality were very honest. One Saturday after the post office had closed the stagecoach arrived with a keg of money for delivery at Cane Hill. The keg was placed on the platform in front of the post office and the stage went on. That keg of money remained there untouched until Monday morning when the post office opened and it was carried inside.

"Grandfather banked in Kansas City. The money was taken about once every month or six weeks. A round-trip required many days. Between times the money was buried around our place. Most of it was gold and silver—little currency. On one occasion, Charley King, a Negro friend of Grandfather, made the journey in a wagon. For safety he hauled a load of corn in the shucks as a ruse. The amount to be banked was about $350—a sizeable sum in those days. Before starting Charley removed a lot of ears from their shucks, then stuffed the shucks with the money and placed the valuable shucks along with the other corn. The trip was made without any holdup.

"Long years before this the Wright brothers were not so fortunate with their savings. Outlaws tried to force them to reveal the hiding place of their money. The brothers refused and were murdered. Angry citizens took to the trail of the murderers. They finally caught them and brought them back to this building where we're sitting. They were given a trial in here, condemned, and taken out to that old maple tree there at edge of the yard and hanged. This building used to be a Methodist church. It served as a hospital for both Union and Confederate soldiers during the war—whichever happened to have control of the town at the time. The hills and valleys saw bitter fighting during those times.

"I forgot to tell you that Father was a Confederate soldier and was wounded in one of the battles around here. He and other wounded men were left behind when their troops moved on. But Father got a crutch and hobbled after them. He finally caught up with them. Once he remarked, 'I walked across the state of Arkansas on a crutch.'

"Father was handy at many kinds of work. A sawmill on Sugar Loaf Mountain down south of here needed a manager one time. He took the job and worked there for several years. Some of the lumber was hauled to the Arkansas River, loaded on flatboats and floated down the

The tree from which the men were hanged still stands today, a grim reminder of harsh justice.

river into the Mississippi and on to New Orleans."

The big mill which was first located at the Pyeatte Spring was one of the most important mills in northwest Arkansas. After the Civil War it was moved to its present location about a mile south of the spring. Powered at first by water from Jordan Creek, it was converted into a steam mill by Rankin Pyeatte and his son-in-law partner, W. S. Moore. The mill flourished as Cane Hill grew. Walter Buchanan, a brother-in-law to H. C. Pyeatte, Mary's father, helped build the mill. The giant wheel, shipped disassembled from the East, was erected by Buchanan and other settlers. During the period when the big wheel was grinding grist, the settlements were in their heyday. There was a pottery plant about a quarter-mile south of the mill. Pottery made here is now much prized by collectors. Miss Pyeatte is the proud possessor of a few pieces. West of the pottery plant a brick works did a flourishing business for many years.

Of all the interesting subjects which invoke memories of pioneer days, the ruins of the historic mill just out of town are perhaps shutterbugged the most. You can't miss this picturesque old veteran of frontier life in northwest Arkansas. It is located near the right side of the highway as you drive southwest from Prairie Grove some eight or ten miles. The huge overshot thirty-six-foot steel wheel is said to be one of the two largest mill wheels of this type in the United States. It dominates the scene as it stands starkly idle, bearing mute testimony to its former importance when Cane Hill was young.

A STORY, not without its thrills, pathos and keen human interest is told by the Rev. J. M. Strickland of Alvin, Texas. Recently he found his sister, Mrs. Mary E. Forsyth, at San Diego, California, whom he had not seen or heard of in sixty years, and whom he supposed was long since dead.

It was in the turbulent days of the early '60s when a band of bushwhackers, under the cover of darkness, took the father of a family of ten children from their home near Cane Hill, Arkansas, and killed him at Fort Smith. The mother languished in illness for a month after the death of the husband and father, then passed into the great beyond. One child died before the rest of the children, driven by want, were forced to leave their home.

They went to the home of their uncle, William Land, or rather to the home of his wife, for he was away in the army and soon died in a hospital at Fort Smith, and left his wife and two children. The widow bravely faced the world with eleven mouths to feed. Production was at a standstill in the South. Only a few old men, women and a multitude of children were left. Hunger stalked abroad in the land, and with hunger came disease and death.

At this time J. M. Strickland was about nine years old. One of his brothers, who was thirteen, contracted pneumonia, by reason of being undernourished and scantily clad, and died. Women fashioned a crude pine box and placed the body therein. They placed the improvised coffin on a homemade slide, hitched a pony to it and J. M. Strickland rode the pony as it pulled the body of his brother to the grave. It does not require a vivid imagination to picture the heartaches of those little children as they followed the strange funeral procession across the bleak hills of Arkansas on a cold winter day. The women lowered the body into the grave and heaped up a mound. The Strickland children remained with Mrs. Land in Scott County about two and a half years, and finally were reduced to a condition bordering on starvation, as were many near the close of the war.

Northern Arkansas was more or less neutral territory, lying between the opposing armies. The government established orphanages, or refuge homes, one of these being at Fort Smith. A northern preacher named Springer was placed in charge of this home and the government fed the inmates. It was to this sanctuary that five women and twenty-one children made their way in 1865 and in the party was Mrs. Land and her two children and the remaining Strickland orphans.

The party started out with a small yoke of oxen, driven to an old wagon, but most of them walked. The distance was forty-six miles, and they had no food and but little money. Hogs were plentiful in the hills, and during the six days required to make the journey they killed three hogs, which were eaten without bread or salt. Rev. Strickland said they cut the meat into strips and roasted it over campfires, each one cooking his own meat on the end of a sharpened stick.

Before reaching Fort Smith the steers gave out and the women and children abandoned the wagon, driving the steers before them into the town.

THE MILITARY orphanage over which Rev. Springer presided was a large residence, the Lathan house, the owner being absent. Mrs. Land and the children stayed there about a year, working at whatever came to hand for their sustenance. Rev. Strickland, now seventy-one years old, worked in the commissary, issuing food. Four of the other Strickland children died of measles during an epidemic.

At the end of the year, the war being over, the refugees were to be sent north. Many of them rebelled, among them the children of the Strickland and Land families. They left the orphanage and made their way as best they could, there being only four of the ten who survived the war period, three boys and a girl.

Shortly after leaving the orphanage, the only girl, Mary Elizabeth Strickland, then sixteen years old, married and moved with her husband to Kansas. Her brothers heard from her for about two months, then they became scattered and

(Continued on page 47)

The huge mill wheel as seen from across the small creek which furnished its power.

WESTERN BOOK ROUNDUP

By The Old Bookaroos

ATTENTION

We do not handle the books reviewed below. If interested in purchasing, please check your local bookstore, or address your order to the individual publisher in care of this office and we will be glad to forward. Be sure to make your check payable to the publisher of the book, not to us.

APACHE SCOUT

He was born in the 1850s, his mother was a captured Mexican woman, his father an Apache warrior. He grew up more than half savage and survived on his own resourcefulness. He spoke Spanish, English, and Apache, and though often used as an interpreter, his main talents were tracker, manhunter, and executioner. To many he was "just another Injun," a "damned gut-eater," a "breed," or "greaser kid," or that "cockeyed rascal." Others believed "he was one of the finest, bravest men ever born." He was Mickey Free, who spent most of his life as a scout with the U.S. Army in Arizona during the Apache campaigns. Al Sieber, Chief of Scouts said, "I hate that somhidge's guts, but he does carry out orders." And Sieber gave the toughest assignments to Free. *Mickey Free, Manhunter* (Caxton Printers, $6.50) by A. Kinney Griffith is the biography of this controversial figure. Free held the ranks of lieutenant and first sergeant. According to Sieber, Mickey Free killed about eighty people, all in the line of duty. He was used to track such renegades as Geronimo, Massai, and the Apache Kid, often living by himself for months off the land. In spite of his blood-spattered career, Free was taken with a delegation to Washington to act as interpreter; he raised a family, was a landowner and businessman. He was pensioned from Army service in 1906 at San Carlos, Arizona. He died in 1913, but his story was never fully known until Griffith spent nearly fifty years ferreting out the bits and pieces. His story is that of the brutal change that transformed the Southwest from what it was to what it is. Highly recommended.

KING OF THE "PULPS"

Biographers of the next decade will have to set a fast pace to best Robert Easton's biography, *Max Brand - The Big "Westerner"* (Univ. of Oklahoma Press, $7.95). This book about Frederick Faust (Max Brand) reads as easy as a prize novel. Regarded by many of his contemporaries as the most prolific producer of prose and poetry in history, the range and versatility of Faust's talent also was remarkable. He had the rare gift of automatic writing and excelled as a romantic novelist, western fiction writer and reporter. Widely traveled, his writing details ran true whether in a cosmopolitan setting, in a desert, in the Arctic, South Seas or on a western ranch. Killed on the front lines while serving as a war correspondent in World War II north of Naples, Faust had lived to see his stories published in numerous pulp and hard paper magazines and in books. Many were sold to movie companies and radio, and television in turn made use of dozens of his writings. In the field of fiction, some of his most popular works are *The Untamed, Destry Rides Again*, and the Dr. Kildare series. Prose writing provided his income but his ambition was to excel as a poet. He turned out volumes of poetry which were good but not tops and he received little money for them. His income during his seventeen chief producing years was enormous but his money vanished as a result of extravagant living and donations to friends and relatives.

"COLD" COLUMNIST

Among other notable accomplishments, Elmer J. White made his mark as the first northland newspaper columnist. His feature column bearing the by-line, "Stroller White," was published for over two decades in newspapers in Dawson, Whitehorse, Bennett and several other towns. A choice selection of his writings are included in the book *Stroller White* (Mitchell Publishing Company, $5.00) compiled by R. N. DeArmand. White spun exaggerated tales of the Art Buchwald format about the salty Klondike characters, miners, sailors, businessmen and others. After the gold rush was over, White was one who stayed and reported news about pioneering Alaskans. In 1918 he became Speaker of the House of Representatives of Alaska Territory. He was the first Director of the Alaska Bureau of Publicity. But newspaper life was his main interest and at the time of his death in 1930 he was publishing his *Stroller's Weekly*. His brittle humor interladen with shrewd observations about life and politics of the gold country is guaranteed to give you a lift and reward you with realistic glimpses of what life was like in the Klondike camps of 1898-1900.

TRYING "BIG BILL"

William D. "Big Bill" Haywood was named by Harry Orchard, confessed dynamite murderer of Idaho's former governor, Frank Steunenburg, as instigating some twenty killings on behalf of the Western Federation of Miners. Haywood, a Federation official, was tried in Boise, Idaho in the summer of 1907. He was defended by Edmund F. Richardson, union attorney from Chicago and Clarence Darrow. The prosecuting lawyer was James H. Hawley, famous western lawyer, and the new senator of Idaho, William E. Borah, who also asked for Haywood's life. *Debaters and Dynamiters* (University of Oregon Press, $6.00) by David H. Grover is a detailed account of Haywood's trial. The labor union movement in Idaho, the violence, and Orchard's confession focused national attention on the trial. Newspapermen from all over the nation covered it. Although most jury members felt Haywood guilty, presiding Judge Fremont Wood's final instructions and the striking of some testimony produced a verdict of not guilty. The trial brought prominence to the labor movement and some labor union differences subsided during Haywood's incarceration and trial. Grover's coverage of this important western event helps answer many questions. His analyses of individual jurors are especially interesting, showing that local public opinion may sway jurors as much as evidence, law, and judges' instructions. Grover became interested in the forensic aspects of the Haywood trial while teaching high school in Boise. In studying the presentations of Richardson, Darrow, Borah and Hawley, he also gathered the necessary historical material for his book. He now teaches speech at Oregon State University. This book earned him the $500 McLain award for the best manuscript on Pacific Northwest history for 1962.

DEVELOPING A RANCH

A family's struggles to transform an acreage in the Canadian Rockies into a working cattle ranch are told in *The Broken Snare* (Doubleday, $5.95) by R. D. Symons. When the man brought his wife, son, and the "Kid" to the newly staked out homestead, moose roamed the meadows, wild horses grazed the sloping hills, and wolves fared well on young moose and horsemeat. The wild-horse wranglers of the rough hills (who were sometimes horse rustlers) were the most advanced signs of civilization. Slowly, and at the expense of much labor, danger and perseverance, native grass gave way to grainfields and meadows; tents gave way to houses; spruce thickets gave way to barns; moose gave way to cattle, wolves gave way to strychnine, rustlers killed each other, and the ranch, so lovingly developed, gave way to bulldozers, oil wells, highways and sheep. Yet, the story is told without bitterness and with a quiet pride of achievement. The beauties of the country and all its resources come to life, and through all the hard work and problems, love and enjoyment of life on the frontier shines through. Symons was born in England, moved to Canada at the age of sixteen, where he worked as trapper, game warden, rancher, writer and artist. A fine story of frontier ranching and the inevitable charge of "progress."

TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRON ROH BITED

Wild Old Days!

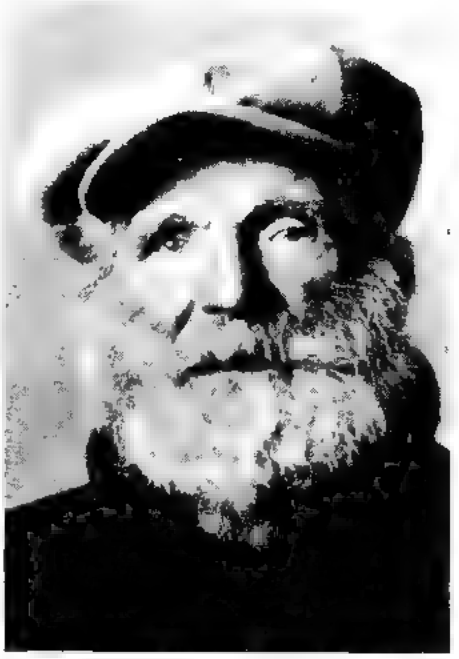
JOE BUTCH

By Laura Trowbridge

PERHAPS it was because in the early days in Montana it was not good form to insist on knowing a man's name if he wanted it kept a secret, that no man who had lived around the Frazer area in the past sixty years really knew who Joe Butch was. He was a picturesque character who was a friend to all, indeed one of the most respected old-timers in the country. Even his best friends never questioned his identity—all they knew was that they liked him, and that he was a good man to his family and friends and hospitable to strangers.

In the heart of what had been hostile Blackfeet Indian land, he had raised remarkable vegetables and strawberries that became famous on the market. Frazer, an old cow-town, was near his home.

It was only a few years before his death that his story came out, told to a friend sometime in the early thirties. Joe Butch was born in England sometime during the 1840s, and his father's name was Abraham Creasley. Theirs was a very poor family so Joe had been put out to work at an early age, but came over to Quebec when he was fourteen, with a young man who was a relative of his employer in England. That young man apprenticed Joe to a tanner named Chamberlain. Joe remained in the tanyard for three years, receiving $36 and his board and room the first year, $42 the second year, and $48 the third year. Those wages seemed like a fortune to a poor boy from England, and he liked Mr.



Courtesy Montana Historical Society, Helena

Joseph Butch Chamberlain, known to most as Joe Butch. A friend to all he knew, his past remained a mystery to even his closest friends.

Chamberlain so well that when he decided to leave his employ he adopted the man's name.

First he went to Montreal at excursion rates to see a balloon ascension and spent all the money he had saved. Then he ran into the same young man whom he had accompanied to Canada from England, and they went to New York City together, and were there during the draft riots of 1863. After hearing of the fall of Vicksburg they became interested in seeing the place of the battle, and took a boat to St. Louis, where Joe found a job.

AFTER the Civil War the government shifted its attention to military activities in the Northwest Indian country, and Joe enlisted for service in the 13th United States Cavalry which was being sent to Dakota Territory. The outfit was assigned to Fort Yates, one of the oldest army posts in the Territory, on the Missouri River, about one hundred miles from the line which separates the two Dakotas now. It was in the center of the vast Sioux domain and meant a dangerous existence even for soldiers.

After a short time the enlisted men at Fort Yates, being on short rations most of the time, came to the conclusion that officers were selling their food and supplies to trappers, hunters, and rivermen. Scurvy added to their concern. Several young enlistees deserted in the summer of 1866, among them, Joe Butch. There were five in his group. They worked their way westward as deckhands on a steamer, the *Trevor*, bound for the extreme headwaters of the Missouri, loaded to capacity with gold-mining equipment including a stamp mill and whiskey for the miners of western Montana and Idaho. There were supplies aboard also for far-west fur posts. The new deckhands acquired much experience in working a heavy boat off sandbars in

The Missouri River Packet Company's sidewheeler, the *Wm. J. Lewis*, in operation from 1866 to 1875. The companion boat to the *Trevor*, it recovered the gold machinery and whiskey buried on the bank of the Missouri.

Courtesy Montana Historical Society, Helena

the treacherous Missouri that spring, only to have the ordeal end in failure. When the boat had reached a point on the river 250 miles from their destination, it was impaled on a huge snag in a sandbar, and shortly split in two.

Most of the machinery aboard was taken ashore by dint of back-breaking effort, and all the whiskey was saved. Then everything on shore, including the stamp mill, was buried in the sand by the river. The pits where the massive machinery had been buried were still visible for many years after the cargo had been reclaimed. Indians expended a great deal of effort in trying to locate the whiskey after it had been removed.

The new deckhands were afoot in a strange, wild land. The Assiniboine were quite friendly to white men due to their fur trading at the posts along the river. They were few and far between, however, and there was none any nearer than Fort Union, almost 200 miles to the east. It was every man for himself, and after the rest of the crew left on rafts, the five boys stayed in the vicinity. (Frazer, the old cow-town, wasn't born yet.) They had heard talk on the boat about what good pay "wood-hawks" could get from steamboats plying the river, so they made up their minds to try it, right where they were. They understood the hazards of attempting to carry on in Indian country, but they were not exactly cowards even if they were deserters.

AFTER only a few days one of the boys was killed by Indians and the others, except Joe Butch, disappeared. He thought for many years after, that they had all been killed but him. Joe swam the river to the south side, ran into some friendly Indians, and decided quickly to stay with them. He became their good friend, and later married Step-on-Joe, one of the maidens of that band. No one seems to know what her name had been before marriage to Joe, but all agree that she was a good, industrious wife and a fine mother to their four children.

Joe and his wife settled on a piece of fertile land along the bank of the Little Porcupine, a mile or two from what was later Frazer. He built a comfortable and fair-sized log house, and lived on his wife's allotment until they started the venture of growing and selling strawberries, which they continued doing until her death in the twenties. Then his teen-age grandson became Joe's helper.

The rigors of frontier life apparently appealed to Joe Butch, almost as much as did the prairies swarming with buffalo, elk, deer, bears and many kinds of smaller fur-bearing animals. He did a great deal of trapping and hunting during the early years while living on the Little Porcupine, but above five years after he came the elk migrated in a body farther west in Montana toward the Rocky Mountains.

Even in old age, a few years before his death, Joe enjoyed remarkably good health, needed no glasses to read, and his hearing was excellent. His memory remained very clear, especially on events far in the past. He still worked vigorously during the summer months in his famous garden, trying to make ends meet without asking for help. Part of it was independence but a greater part was because of a dread that his past would be discovered and he would be arrested and punished. One reason he adopted the name of "Joe Butch" was that he had served in his earlier years in Montana among the Indians as a butcher and cook for buffalo-hunters many times.

It was his dread of exposure which kept him from applying to the Government for a soldier's pension. With the assurance of his friends a few years before he died, he did apply. Nothing adverse happened, and in June 1926 he was granted a pension of $50 a month, made retroactive to March 1925. He received a check in the amount of $750, accumulated back pay.

DURING this time, it had been learned that one of the boys whom he had thought killed by the Indians, was alive and had become a millionaire lumberman in Oregon and California. His friend was extremely happy to hear that Joe had survived also, and he was surprised to hear that he had stayed in the area of the boat wreck for so many years. He wrote to Joe to come and visit, but Joe refused to leave his home. The next Christmas Joe received a $150 check from his old Army buddy with a message which said, "Buy yourself a cigar for Christmas, Joe."

Joe died March 22, 1931, in Frazer at the age of eighty-six, and was buried two days later with full military honors. He was one of the last of the frontiersmen who had lived in the heyday of the buffalo.

TATOOSH ISLAND

By Mary Lou Hanify

THE RECENT closing of the weather station on Tatoosh Island off Washington's Cape Flattery stirred some poignant memories for Mrs. Hazel Snelgrove of Port Angeles. He father, Frank Beahan, was one of the first weather observers to be stationed on the windswept pile of sandstone and basalt which the Nootka Indians named "Tatooche," meaning a mighty bird dwelling far away in a mystic land.

Beahan took his bride, Ella, to the island in 1888, five years after a weather station was first established. Their two daughters, Hazel and Vivian, spent their early childhood playing on the seventeen-acre island which was known as "the front-porch light of America."

Hazel Snelgrove holds photo of her mother, Ella Beahan, who went to Tatoosh as a young bride back in 1888.

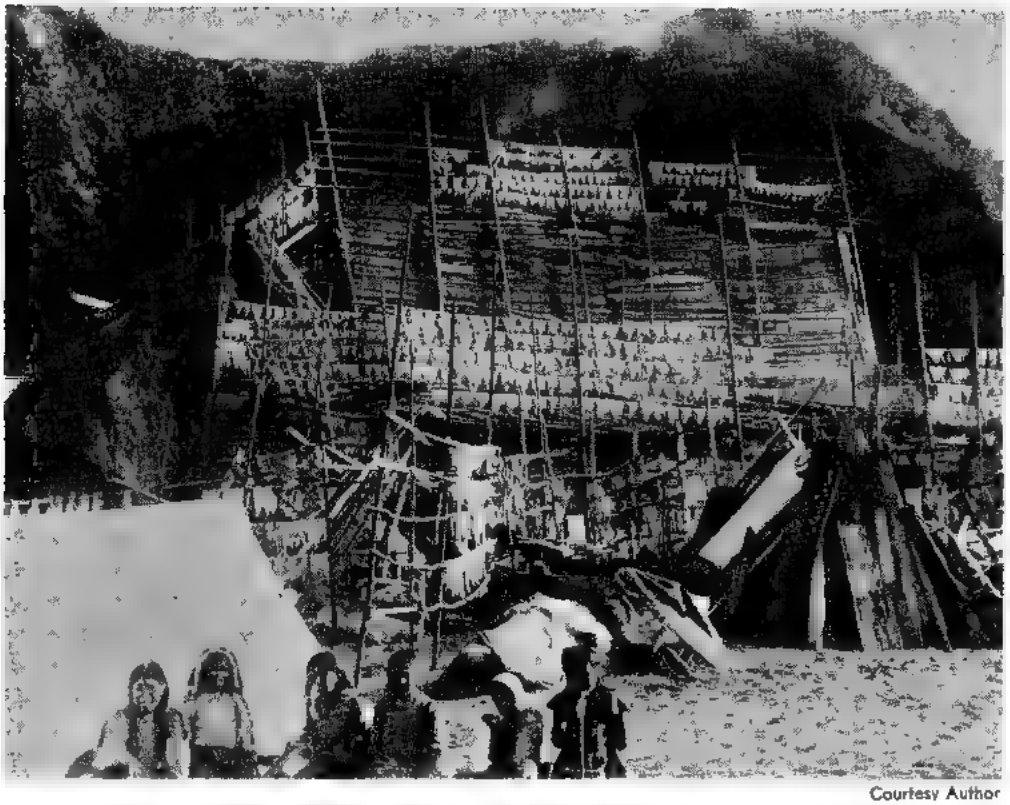
"Our house foundation was anchored to the rocks to keep it from blowing away," Mrs. Snelgrove recalled. "My father built a wire fence play yard to keep us children from wandering. He brought some lovely beach sand and put it inside the fence. Within an hour, we were eating the sand, and I had figured out how to climb over the top of the fence."

After that, the children were tied with ropes to their father's desk to keep them from blowing into the sea. The children had a strange merry-go-around consisting of two-by-fours criss-crossed on a base which was anchored by bags of coal. The wind supplied the power for turning the ride.

John Cowan, the lighthouse-keeper, also

(Continued on next page)

The first house occupied by the Beahan family on Tatoosh Island. It was anchored to the rocks by cables to protect it from high winds.



Courtesy Author

Makah and Ozette Indians came to the island each summer to catch and dry fish. Note the elaborate drying racks. A Bert Kellogg photo taken about 1881.

lived on Tatoosh Island with his wife and six children. With the Cowan children and Beahan's two daughters, there was never a lack of amusement. What one child couldn't think up, another one could.

"Once we lowered the youngest Cowan child, Kenneth, by rope over a cliff to get some seagull eggs," Mrs. Snelgrove said. "That it was an eigthy-foot drop to the rocks below did not concern us at the time."

Kenneth got the eggs, but they had some difficulty pulling him back safely when the rope began to fray. They took off their coats and put them under the ropes, which gave enough support to complete the rescue operation.

The family water supply was rainwater which accumlated in a barrel standing under the eave of the house. Coal was used for cooking, heating and power. Groceries were purchased in Seattle each September because it wasn't always possible to get off the island during stormy winter months, nor could anyone get to the islanders for the same reason.

"We bought our flour by the 100-pound barrel," Said Mrs. Snelgrove. "We bought a hundred pounds of sugar at a time, dried fruits, tubs of Norwegian mackerel packed in oil and chow-chow—a sort of mustard pickle."

At first they bought beef and corned it, but later they started raising a few cattle on the island for fresh meat. Mrs. Snelgrove's mother also was able to keep a few chickens and a small garden.

The Beahan family even had fresh milk after their family cow was shipped over from Neah Bay in a whaling canoe. The cow, a pedigreed Jersey, was quite nonchalant about the event, hunching down by a bale of hay in the canoe, placidly chewing her cud. When the canoe landed, the cow gracefully stepped out as though she had traveled in such a manner every day of her life.

TRAVEL to and from Tatoosh Island was accomplished by riding a steamer from Port Angeles to Neah Bay, and from there to the island by Indian canoe. Mrs. Snelgrove says that the beach on the island where the boats landed since has filled in by natural processes, and that arrivals today are hoisted up the cliff in a basket powered by winches. When the Beahans wanted to get off the island, they signalled a passing tug by flying their Union Jack upside down. The tugboat captains soon learned there was likely to be a fresh chicken dinner for them when they stopped at Tatoosh to pick up passengers.

The weather station was relocated at Neah Bay from July 12, 1898, until November 22, 1902, when Frank Beahan closed the station at Neah Bay and reopened it on Tatoosh Island. During those years, Lucy Irving, an Indian girl, lived with the Beahan family, helping them with sewing and other household duties. She also taught them the Makah language, much of which is remembered by Mrs. Snelgrove today.

Education was a problem for the children on the island so it was decided to bring in a private tutor. Classes were held in the Cowan living room at the lighthouse. One day when a flock of geese was spotted flying past, Hazel and Shirley Cowan managed to escape the teacher's notice and slipped out of an open window to go hunting.

This experience proved to be too much for the teacher, and the parents decided that engaging a private tutor was more trouble than it was worth. The Cowan children were sent away to parochial school, and Hazel was boarded out at Annie Wright Seminary in Tacoma, while her sister stayed in Port Angeles with an aunt.

Mrs. Snelgrove's father retired in 1905 and the family moved to Port Angeles. The Weather Bureau continued operating the station on Tatoosh Island until it was moved in 1966 to Quillayute Airport near Forks.

According to Chauncy T. Beach, technical assistant of the Weather Bureau Forecast Center in Seattle, the move to Quillayute Airport was made for several reasons. Maintaining quarters and equipment, providing supplies and materials and keeping a complement of trained personnel on Tatoosh created difficulties which required extraordinary effort by many persons.

For the present, the Coast Guard still is maintaining lighthouse operations on Tatoosh Island.

ON THE DUGWAY

Submitted by Kerry Ross Boren

The perils of travel in the Old West, especially for women, are often overlooked in lieu of more spectacular events. However, the following excerpt from the journal of Lucina Mecham Boren illustrates this hazard dramatically. Lucina, whose husband William Jasper Boren was critically ill, was the sole support of her family. To earn a living, this pioneer woman sold meat, butter, eggs, grain and other products in the Utah Valley, purchasing with the profit items of merchandise which she transported back to her home in Wallsburg, Utah and sold to customers at a makeshift store in her home.

In order to carry on this business, it was necessary for Lucina to make the thirty-mile trip through a hazardous and precipitous canyon and back once or twice a week, accompanied only by one of her young sons or daughters and often alone. The canyon roads of Utah in the 1890s were inhabited with varied dangers, to which the following incidents in the life of Lucina Mecham Boren are a testament.—Kerry Ross Boren

ONE DAY while returning from Heber, the draw bolt that holds the tongue to the wagon, broke while coming down the hill we call McAfee Hill. The horses got away. The wagon was slowly running down the hill. I jumped out, turned the front wheels; the wagon went off into the sagebrush and stopped. We had a heavy load and if I had not succeeded in turning the wheels of the wagon out of the road, it would have gone over an embankment and caused a lot of damage.

Mr. James Sabey lived at the bottom of the hill. He took his horses and got the wagon on the road. Said he would

take me until we met Wilford [Lucina's thirteen-year-old son] as he had gone to find the horses. He [Wilford] walked all the way home, about five miles. When he got there the horses were not home, so he got Clinton and they came back after me. Mr. Sabey and I did not get far when we saw our horses off the side of the road in some willows. Mr. Sabey got them and put them on my wagon. I told him I could go home alone, and thanked him for what he had done for me. It soon got so dark that I could not see the road. I had to let the horses go and hoped they would keep on the road and the things I imagined were awful. I saw a light coming, then soon I saw it was Clinton and Wilford with a lantern, and I cannot begin to tell how glad I was to see them.

My husband was feeling fairly well one day and said he would like to go with me to American Fork. We had no way to bank our money, so we had to carry it along with us, and sometimes it was a nice sum. When we got part way, in Provo Canyon, a man stepped in front of the horses with a gun in his hand and told us to stop. I thought he was after our money, sure, but he asked if we had seen some horses, said he had lost his.

Lucina Mecham Boren in 1890.

Courtesy Author

We told him we had not. He had just killed a wild chicken and asked us if we wanted it. We took it and roasted it for our dinner.

One day my little boy and I were on the long dugway and met some wagons. We tried to get them to stop where there was plenty of room for us to pass, but they kept on coming. I asked them to back up a little ways but they would not, said there was plenty of room to pass. When we tried to get back on the road we could not. Another wagon came along; the man came and helped us. He and I stood on the upper side of the wagon to keep it from tipping over, and Wilford drove the horses and wagon down into the willows, went along the river for about two hundred yards and then got back on the road.

Another time my little grandson was with me and on a long dugway we saw a wagon coming. I waved my hand for him to stop, as there was no place to stop where we were, but he kept on coming. I kept on the upper side—which was my side. He came and said, "Lady, you will have to take the other side, as I have a load and cannot take the lower side." I told him I had a load too, that he should have stayed on the other end of the dugway and waited for us. He said, "Well, you will have to get on the lower side." I said, "I am on the upper side, and I am going to stay here until someone comes and we will see who is going to the lower side of the road." Just then a wagon came in sight. He got in his wagon, got around me and went without another word.

I HAD a two-seated buggy and sometimes I would go to Heber in it. My daughter Zora went with me one day and as we were on a long stretch where there were no houses, we saw a man limping along as if in much pain. He stopped us and asked how far it was to the next town, then he asked us for money, saying he had a bad accident and must go to California where the doctor said he could get well. I knew he was not telling the truth. Then he asked if we would only give him twenty-five cents. I said, "People without money cannot give it."

He said he had left some papers at the house where he stayed the night before and would we be kind enough to let him ride back with us. He got in the back seat and asked if we were going to Heber to buy supplies. "That all depends if our credit is good," I said. He asked me to stop and let him out—the people could send him the papers. As he walked away he could walk as good as anyone. I always thought he had a gun, as his coat hung to one side as if he had something heavy in it.

When we got home that night we were told that he had come to Wallsburg and went to Mrs. Robert Glenn's and asked to stay the night. She told him her husband was not home and he would have to go someplace else. He said, "So much the better." She screamed, a neighbor heard her and came running to see what was wrong. The stranger saw him coming and ran away and no one saw him again. Mrs. Glenn said she learned never to tell a stranger that her husband was away.

Another time I went to Heber alone and a man pulled his wagon across the road to stop me, but I drove off out of the road going through sagebrush. I got around him and back in the road. He followed me, but my horses were too fast for him. He soon stopped, turned around and started back. I was afraid he might be waiting for me on my way back home, but I got there all right and I said I would never go alone again.

DARING DAYLIGHT ROBBERY

By Donna Turnbull

THE EXCITEMENT in Del Norte, Colorado one morning in the summer of 1887 was caused by a messenger from Osgood's mill, sixteen miles above town on the Summitville road, calling for a doctor to attend Superintendent Watson of the Annie Mine who had been wounded by hold-up men. The messenger also alerted the sheriff, who formed a posse.

Supt. Watson and Asst. Supt. Burton had left the gold camp of Summitville at seven that morning guarding a brick of gold weighing almost seventy-five pounds. When they were about an eighth of a mile down the hill from the toll-gate, they were fired upon from a distance of about fifteen feet from some bushes by the road. Burton threw himself from the carriage, falling by the side of the road as if dead, although he was only slightly wounded. He said the robbers were masked and had come to look at him but thought him dead, he was so covered with blood.

The horses bolted, running forward, upsetting the carriage and pinning Watson, who had been holding the lines, underneath. Burton rolled to where the carriage had upset, found the valise containing the gold brick, grabbed it and jumped into the brush, hiding there for several hours until he made his way to Osgood's mill, arriving there at four o'clock in the afternoon.

The Summitville mail stage had been about a quarter of a mile ahead of Watson's and Burton's carriage and was soon overtaken by the frantic horses. Lempke, the driver, turned back, thinking there had been an accident. A short distance away he met Mr. Watson who had extricated himself from the overturned carriage and was wandering around in a daze, unable to tell what had happened. He had to be forced to get into the stage and was taken to Osgood's mill where he recovered enough to report the hold-up.

A search was begun for Burton, but he had hidden himself so well he couldn't be found. He arrived late in the afternoon carrying the gold brick and completely exhausted.

The trail of the bandits was followed to Jasper, another mining town in the vicinity, and on to Pinos Creek. One of the men had on heavy miner's boots with wide soles, and the other wore high-heeled boots. The trail was finally lost on

Rock Creek and the men were never apprehended.

Supt. Watson was taken from Osgood's mill to Del Norte, suffering from a wound in the arm and concussion. He eventually recovered from both.

Death Messenger of the Indians

(Continued from page 21)

Private Conrad Tragesor of Troop I, 8th Cavalry suffered arrow wounds in the left side. One shaft passed through his lower intestine transfixing the kidney. Many other soldiers fell prey to the unerring marksmanship of Kiowa, Cheyenne or Sioux, but the government didn't issue protective padding for soldiers to wrap around their bodies during an Indian attack.

ARROW SHAFTS were prepared from hickory, white ash and willow which grew in abundance along the stream banks. Arrows of the same tribe were not always made the same size nor of the same material. They were shaped by the Indian according to his fancy. The Teton Sioux, for example, used both iron and flint for arrowheads. There seemed to be no particular difference between hunting and war arrows. Many times, however, for hunting small animals and birds, the Indians would use arrows without the heads.

In order to prevent the easy extraction of arrowheads from the body, Indians used a glue to bind the head to the shaft. This glue would become soft when the arrow entered the body causing the shaft to detach easily from the head.

With the coming of the settlers and soldiers the Indians of the Plains were able to get iron from discarded barrel hoops which they filed to the desired shape.

Baron Percy, a soldier of some note, long ago declared that military surgery had its origin in the treatment of wounds inflicted by darts and arrows. To bear out his contention, Percy often quoted his favorite poet, Homer. Homer in the *Iliad* relates many, many tales of wars involving arrows, darts and spears. Fact of the matter is, Hippocrates, Father of Medicine, served in many military campaigns wherein he was called upon to extract arrows and darts from the bodies of ancient Athenian soldiers, much as our army surgeons of the Indian wars.

It was during one of these ancient conflicts that Heros of Cappadocia designed the famous duckbill forceps, which with all conceivable modifications has continued in use to the present time. Celsus in his "De Medicina" describes the extraction of arrowheads. He said that the entrance to the wound should be dilated, the barb of the arrowhead crushed by pliers or protected between the grooves of a split reed and then withdrawn without lacerating the soft parts of the flesh.

With the exception of time and place these statements by the ancients could have well been made by U. S. Army surgeons, as the removal of arrows was a common and nearly daily task of the latter. It was only natural then that techniques for the removal of these barbed shafts should furnish a good topic for discussion in the medical detachments and hospitals of the Indian West.

Several ingenious expedients and devices were described for the removal of barbed arrowheads when buried in the soft parts or large cavities of the body. In one case a Navaho arrowhead penetrated the victim's lung to a depth of five inches. Dr. Bill removed it by means of a snare fashioned from wire. He used the arrow shaft as a guide, eased the wire snare down the arrow over the barbed head and thus removed the arrowhead.

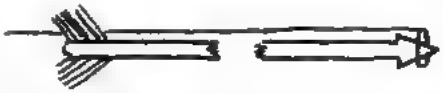


Fig. 1—Wire loop for extracting arrowheads embedded in soft parts of body (after drawing by surgeon J. H. Bill).

When arrowheads are lodged in bones and cannot be dislodged by a gentle rocking motion of the shaft, Dr. Bill advised that a "twister" be made from two and one-half feet of annealed wire and a long suture. The wire ends were passed through the holes in the suture up to the handle, leaving a loop at the end. The loop could be worked over the arrowhead, after which the suture would be twisted to tighten the wire after which both could then be removed.

Fig. 2—Wire loop twister for snaring impacted arrowheads (after drawing by surgeon J. H. Bill).

Whenever possible, however, most surgeons agreed that it was preferable to cut down upon the arrowhead and remove it with forceps.

With the replacement of the bow and arrow by firearms, the problem of arrow wounds and their treatment faded into history. But if, in your wanderings, you stub your toe on a now harmless triangular artifact, think for a moment of what might have been transpiring when it made its last flight from the bow.

Trails Grown Dim

(Continued from page 31)

was William Howe's father, the sea captain?

My father's family lived in Montesano, Washington in the early days. One time, one of the little children came in from play and told her parents, "There are two big dogs out in the yard and I wanted to pet them but I was a little afraid." Her folks knew that there were no big dogs around and looked out the window. As they suspected, there were two large cougars near the house, one lying down and the other sitting on his haunches.

At another time the family lived in a village by a river on the emigrant trail. On the other side of the river was a large encampment of people going west. My father had a beautiful teenage niece, said to be the prettiest girl in town. For several days a couple of strangers had been seen hanging around town but no one thought much of it. One day, while all the able-bodied men were away at work, the two strangers went to the livery stable at the far end of town and rented the finest and fastest team available and came riding through town in a buggy.

Daddy's niece and her girl friend were walking down the street. One of the men reached down and swooped the niece up into the buggy. In almost no time, they had reached the water's edge where a boat was waiting, the last one on this side of the river. The three were rowed across and the emigrant train left immediately for the West. The townspeople and relatives of the girl organized a party and started out in pursuit. For two weeks a desperate search was continued, but no one would give out any information and not a trace could be found of the missing girl. She was never heard of again.

Does anyone know the Howe girl's given name, the date, or the name of the town? We know they lived at Fort Scott, Kansas for a time, and Uncle Theodore talked a lot about St. Joe (Saint Joseph), Missouri.—Mrs. Amanda Howe Morgan, Route 1, Box 552, Turner, Oregon 97392

Lydia Sly

I am trying to locate Lydia Sly or her children. Last I heard of her was about 1919 in Medford, Wisconsin. Her mother's name was Mrs. Cobo. She had married twice. Lydia went to Little Black School when I was in school there. My parents, Sil and Jenny Perry, had a section of land there before they moved to Canada in 1908. Their old house was still standing in 1955. I would appreciate any information anyone will send me.—Mrs. R. K. Orr, Cater, Saskatchewan, Canada

Hall-Miller

I would appreciate any information on John Hall, born March 13, 1847, died November 29, 1864. He married Mary C. Miller, born February 17, 1847, died March 29, 1909. They were the parents of thirteen children who were born and who died between 1865 and 1904, possibly in Nebraska or Illinois: William Henry, Flora, Carter B., Dora, James C., Logan, Loman, Carrie May, Epsie Jane, Lucy Louise, Allan, Luther and Jones Lester.

William Henry Hall married Mary Grace Haworth on January 24, 1889 at Homerville, Nebraska. She was born October 10, 1869 at Kokomo, Indiana and died in 1957 in Adams or Guymon, Oklahoma. They came to Oklahoma in 1902 and homesteaded in Harper County until 1919, then moving to Texas County, Oklahoma.—Mrs. J. T. Hall, 788 West 1st North, Vernal, Utah 84078

W. L. (William) Brock

William L. Brock came from Georgia to Texas between 1856 (the year he was born) and 1866. I do not know his parents' names or where they lived in Georgia. Bill Brock lived with his father-in-

(Continued on page 56)

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PEG LEG

By VERNER G. BENSON

Illustration by Bill Seymour

He was unsound in body and—perhaps—in mind. One thing in his life was whole, however, and that was the ill will with which his neighbors regarded him...

FLAGSTAFF, Arizona, just after the turn of the century, was a small logging and cattle town, consisting mostly of saloons, a store or two and a lumber mill. North of Flagstaff lie the San Francisco Peaks, highest in Arizona, called the "Peaks" or more often simply the "Mountain." Beginning in the summer of 1909 the entire area was terrorized by a one-legged man wearing a hand-made wooden leg.

The Peaks are high, covered with growths of aspen, fir and pine to timberline, cut with steep canyons, and dotted with boulders the size of railroad locomotives. In the early 1900s several small hay ranches nestled on the lower slopes. They and a few line shacks, used during the summer months by cow outfits, were the only habitations.

Terrifying is an odd way to describe Peg Leg, as he was called, because he hurt no one, accosted no one; in fact, there is no record of his even speaking to anyone. Occasionally he broke into isolated ranch homes and took food and ammunition but never more than he needed. Valuables were left untouched. The terror, and it was very real, came from the mystery of the man himself. He avoided people, he was seen but unknown—and the unknown, especially in isolated places, is always frightening.

He wandered all over the mountain, scrambling up slopes difficult for a man with two good legs to climb, yet was seen only at a distance. On rare occasions he was spotted clumping along the trails which passed for roads in that area but before the wagon or rider could catch up with him he had darted off into the underbrush and disappeared. Late at night a fire, thought to be Peg Leg's, could be seen high on the mountain, but no matter how quickly investigators might arrive the fire would be out, the ashes scattered, and Peg Leg gone.

Women at isolated cabins locked their doors, an unusual thing in itself, and refused to venture out after dark. Lonely herders kept one eye on their flocks and

(Continued on page 52)

The Claim Jumpers

(Continued from page 17)

Pete had filled the irrigation ditches to let the water flow on the stubbled field, and that evening when he came into the mess cabin for his milk pails he informed us that there was a four-horse team loaded with logs in the middle of the alfalfa field. Pete said the load of logs had come in by way of the reservation fence which had been cut a couple of hundred yards above the wire gate at the stage road, and now was bogged down in the irrigated mud slap-dab in the broad middle of the field. Besides the driver of the four-horse team there were two men riding the logs whom Pete identified as Spurlock and Wells. Pete figured they were about to unload the logs which were fastened by heavy chains to the running gears of the wagon.

Jake Myers, sitting on the bench across the table from me, gave me a meaningful nod. He told the big Swede, Pete, to go ahead with his milking chores—that he'd take care of the situation directly he finished supper.

"Looks like Spurlock has finally opened the pot," Jake said when Pete had gone out with his milk pails. "Me'n you and Walt Sizer here are about to buy a stack of chips in his game." Sizer, sitting alongside me, put a grin on his face as he kicked me under the long table. I kicked him back.

SHORTLY afterwards, the three of us were ahorseback. It was dark and drizzling rain and we all wore yellow Fish brand saddle slickers. All of us packed six-shooters shoved in the waistband of our Levi's, and as we rode along at a jog trot Jake gave me'n Sizer our orders.

Jake had gotten word that a stranger was staying at Spurlock's place who had a four-horse team, and that for the past few weeks Spurlock and Wells and the stranger had been cutting timber on a permit from the forest service. Charlie Beard, who happened to be a close friend of the chief forest ranger, had gotten the information and passed it on to Jake.

"There's three of them," Jake said, "and three of us. You two fellers keep your hands off your six-shooters. Any gun play happens to come up, I'll handle it. You two keep your mouths buttoned up and use your wet ketch ropes."

I was told to tie into the driver of the four-horse team. Walt Sizer's big meat was Wells. Jake would tend to Spurlock. All three of us wore black silk handkerchiefs tied loosely around our necks that we would pull up across our faces.

"In our saddle slickers and black masks," Jake said with a chuckle, "we'll look for all the world like members of the Ku Klux Klan night riders."

We went in by way of the reservation gate and entered the alfalfa field through the gap cut in the fence. Jake muttered in a low tone that it was a federal offense to cut the wires of the government fence. We were close enough now to make out the three men who were black shadows moving around in the wet drizzle in the yellow glow of a lantern. Then came the authoritative brittle sound of Spurlock's voice.

"One more log left. Bear down on that peavey hook, Briggs. Handle your end of the log, Wells. I'll take care of this end. Let's roll 'em!"

There was a dull splashing thud as the log rolled off the running gears of the wagon to the sodden ground. Then Spurlock's rasping voice came again.

"Drive your team clear of the log pile, Briggs!" Spurlock's brittle laugh had the sound of dry seeds rattling in a gourd. "Come daybreak the three of us will have the log walls of Tom Briggs' homestead cabin set up on the Coburn kid's claim. Squatter's rights, Briggs. And possession's nine-tenths of the law."

"Stampede the team," Jake whispered to me as he rode close. "Double that wet rope across Briggs' back. Lay it on heavy. You got your man picked out, Sizer? All right, have at 'em!"

We all spurred our horses to a run, covering the short distance in a swift night rider's charge, swinging wet ropes as we rode down our men.

My man Briggs was seated straddle of the "reach" which connected the front axle and the rear axle, a few feet back of the front running gear. He'd yelled at his team to tighten up, and when they hit their collars to tighten the chain tugs, the four bogged wheels of the unloaded wagon came free of the mud with a jerk. At that same moment came the sudden crack of Jake's .45 six-shooter, a quick explosion that sounded loud as a dynamite blast, accompanied by a sudden burst of flame.

Before I could swing my wet rope down across Briggs' back, my green broke bronc whirled and jumped, bogged his head and started pitching. At the same time the four-horse team, spooked by the explosion and sudden burst of flame, broke into a run and Briggs had his hands full with a runaway. By the time I got my horse's head jerked up he had broken into a run, and I managed to steer him in the direction of the runaway team which was headed for the gap in the reservation fence—as near as I could figure in the black drizzle.

Briggs was hollering, "God's sakes, don't shoot my horses! Whoa, boys!" He was cussing in a choked voice.

Briggs got his team stopped just this side of the reservation fence. He had been jolted off his perch on the reach and was holding a death grip on the lines. He'd been dragged in the mud and was a skinned-up mess as he stood alongside his wagon, knee deep in muck, weaving on his legs like he was drunk. Then he sighted me as I rode up with my wet rope in my hand.

"I got a-plenty, mister!" Briggs pleaded as he reached for the sky. "I got a bellyful. Don't hurt my horses!"

The cold drizzle had slackened up a little and a half moon shoved through the scudding rain clouds to shed a pale, ghostly light. I could see the scared look on Briggs' face.

"If you're fixing to rope me," his nasal voice had a dry sound, "and drag me to death—I bin drug enough to hold me. It was Spurlock who got me drunk and talked me into this mess in the first place. He aimed to get the homestead later for himself and Wells. Let me go and I'll quit the country."

"Nobody's aiming to drag you to death," I said, feeling sorry for the man. "Nobody's going to hurt you or your horses. But I got orders to ride herd on you and I aim to keep you here on ice for a while. So simmer down."

A few minutes later Jake and Sizer rode up in the dim moonlight. They were sure a welcome sight. In their saddle slickers and black masks that were plastered down over their faces, leaving only the eyes visible, they had the dangerous look of a pair of road agents. Or, as Jake had put it, like members of the Ku Klux Klan. Jake was sizing up the muddy Briggs who was still reaching for the moon.

"Is your name Tom Briggs?" Jake's voice was unrecognizable behind the mask.

"That's me," Briggs voice sounded scared.

Courtesy Montana Historical Society, Helena

Fort Belknap Indian Reservation, date unknown. Agency corral is in foreground, school on far left in distance. The main agency buildings are on far right in distance.

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"You're the gent that aimed to jump this homestead claim. You done filed your contest at the land office at Dodson." Jake made it sound like a flat statement, rather than a question.

"I done changed my mind," Briggs replied in a plaintive tone.

"That remains to be proven later on," Jake said. "Where you aimin' to go when we turn you loose? Back to Spurlock's place?"

"Not by a damn sight." Briggs shook his head.

"That's a good lookin' four-horse team you got there, Briggs. How'd you like a job haulin' freight for the Circle C?"

"Suits me fine," Briggs' face spread in a toothless grin.

"Get a box on them runnin' gears, and show up at the ranch tomorrow. We'll talk 'er over," Jake told him.

Jake motioned to me'n Sizer and the three of us rode back the way we come, with our neckerchiefs no longer masking our faces and our saddle slickers unbuttoned in the night that had lost its wet chill. On our ride to the ranch Jake told me how he had shot out the lantern light and exploded the kerosene in the basin of the lantern—how he'd worked Spurlock over with his wet rope until the squawman made a run for home like a scared coyote, looking back across his shoulder and hollering not to shoot him in the back—how Walt Sizer had whipped the luckless Wells with a wet rope until he was crawling through the gumbo mud and bawling like a mammyless calf at a roundup. Jake had to holler at Walt Sizer to let up on him so that he could make a run for home.

I told Jake what Briggs had told me—how Spurlock had a jug of rotgut booze at his place and had gotten Briggs drunk, then talked him into jumping my homestead claim, and that Briggs claimed Spurlock and Wells planned to have him turn the 320 acres over to them at a later date.

Jake warned us to keep our mouths shut about what had happened; that while he reckoned Spurlock and Wells had learned their lesson, a man never knew for sure which way they might jump, and for all Tom Briggs had to say when we had him by the short hairs he might have a change of mind by morning. Jake said Briggs had muttered something about the wagon box being at Spurlock's place, and like as not Spurlock had another jug and the three of them would be working on it while they licked their wounds. Also the brave-maker might give them the guts to make trouble.

Charlie Beard had found out that a honyaker scissorbill by the name of Thomas Briggs had filed a contest notice to my homestead claim at the Dodson Land Office, and Spurlock and Wells had signed affidavits to the effects that I had not lived up to the terms required of a homesteader. The land locator at Dodson had advised Briggs to move in and claim squatter's rights. Briggs had followed his instructions with the two squawmen backing his play.

NEXT MORNING after a daylight breakfast Jake took me along on a sort of scouting trip to look over the battleground. Just in case Spurlock got the notion to taking a pot-shot at us from his cabin while we were looking around, both of us packed Winchester .30-30 carbine saddle guns, and Jake had a pair of powerful field glasses to watch the squawman's house.

When we rode into the alfalfa field there were two old Indian policemen sitting their ponies and pointing at the cut wires of the reservation fence. They were Old Thunder and Has the Whip, Assiniboine chiefs, proud of their Indian policeman status, with their brass-buttoned blue coats and billy clubs shoved into their belts. They were talking excitedly and angrily, and seemed eager and willing to arrest the men who had dared cut a gap in the reservation fence. Those old Indian policemen took their job mighty seriously, and they knew that unless the culprits were caught red-handed they were out of luck. The sign read there were three separate boot prints, the shod imprints of four horses hauling a wagon, and that was all.

There on the ground within the boundary stakes of my homestead was a pile of peeled logs fifteen feet long, with deep notches at both ends, all fixed and ready to form the four walls of the cabin. It would have been an easy matter for three strong men to set them in place. There were two long-handled log hooks lying in the mud, and three heavy log

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chains, and the shattered lantern with a bullet hole in the basin.

Jake rode slowly around, cutting for sign, leaning sideways from his saddle, whistling tunelessly through his teeth. The whistling stopped abruptly when he swung down from the saddle and picked up a Colt .38 automatic. Jake wiped off the checkered hardwood butt with a bandana handkerchief until the deep-carved initials J. S. showed clear. There was no doubt about it. The gun belonged to Jasper Spurlock. Jake said he had kicked the gun loose from Spurlock's hand before the squawman had a chance to use it.

"Nobody but a damn fool ever carved his initials on his gun butt," Jake said. "If that initialled gun was produced in a law court it would be his death warrant."

Jake shoved the automatic in his chaps pocket, then mounted his horse. He took out the field glasses from their case and focused them for what seemed a long time on Spurlock's place, then on Well's log cabin.

"Nobody home at either place," Jake finally said. "I reckon Briggs done picked up his wagon box and drifted yonderly."

As we rode back to the ranch, Jake kept whistling tunelessly between his teeth, a habit of his when he was thinking things out. His heavy black brows were knitted together.

Tom Briggs failed to show up that day as he had promised, and I could tell Jake was getting worried around the edges. Me'n Jake were sitting in the office that evening after supper when the old-fashioned box telephone on the log wall commenced jangling. Two long rings was our Circle C number, but Jake yanked the receiver from its hook on the first ring. When Jake Myers used the phone he had the habit of talking loud, as did most cowpunchers unaccustomed to using a telephone.

"Yeah, this is Jake Myers. Who's talking? Howdy, Ike. Yep, the kid's right here in the office. How's that again? Bench warrants for me'n the kid? No need for you to come out. We'll start for Malta first thing after breakfast. Meet you at the Great Northern Hotel afore noon. So long, Ike." Jake banged down the receiver and turned to me.

"That was Deputy Sheriff Ike Neibaur at Dodson," he said. "Spurlock and Wells have sworn out bench warrants for me'n you, charging us with assault with intent to commit murder. Ike said for me to get in touch with a lawyer right away. Looks like we're in a bad tight, feller, and we better make a little medicine."

I WAS DOING a lot of fast skull work, trying to think back on everything that had happened last night, racking my memory. Then I recalled something that might be important.

"While I was getting Briggs calmed down, Jake," I said, "—and for gosh sakes quit walking the floor and listen—I heard you holler at Walt Sizer when he was using his wet rope on Wells. You yelled, 'Let the sorry devil up, Walt. He's had a-plenty.' And that gave Wells the idea it was Walt Coburn you yelled at."

"That's right," Jake agreed. "Two Walts. One Walt Coburn. One Walt Sizer."

"Take Spurlock's gun along, Jake," I advised. "It might come in handy as Exhibit A to prove that Spurlock pulled his gun on you and you had to kick it out of his hand."

"Shows what a little education does for a cowpuncher," Jake grinned at me.

Jake got John A. Tressler on the telephone. Tressler was attorney for the Circle C outfit and he was also the first mayor of Malta. Tressler said later that Jake like to have busted his eardrum with his loud hollering over the phone.

After a long medicine talk with Walt Sizer all we needed was the missing Tom Briggs to testify that I was with him and could not have been the man who had rope-whipped Wells. Briggs could easily identify me because I'd let my mask slip.

Deputy Sheriff Ike Neibaur was waiting in the lobby of the Great Northern Hotel at Malta when me'n Jake and Sizer walked in about ten a.m. Ike Neibaur, former Circle C top cowhand and one-time wagon boss, smiled faintly as he served the bench warrants on me'n Jake. The preliminary hearing was to take place in the justice of the peace courtroom at Dodson, and Ike said we'd all take the train (the Skidoo local) that was due in Malta at one p.m. That would give us time to talk to our attorney at his office, have lunch, and meet him back in the hotel lobby just before train time.

After Jake Myers had explained to John Tressler in detail the whole thing from start to finish, the attorney talked on the telephone to the justice of the peace at Dodson.

"Your hearing will be held in Judge Chambers' private quarters," Tressler told us when he'd hung up. "I'll be along to represent you. The attorney for Spurlock and Wells will also be there with the two complainants. Our surprise witness, Walt Sizer, will be kept in the background, somewhere within call." The attorney placed Spurlock's Colt .38 automatic, wrapped in paper, in his briefcase.

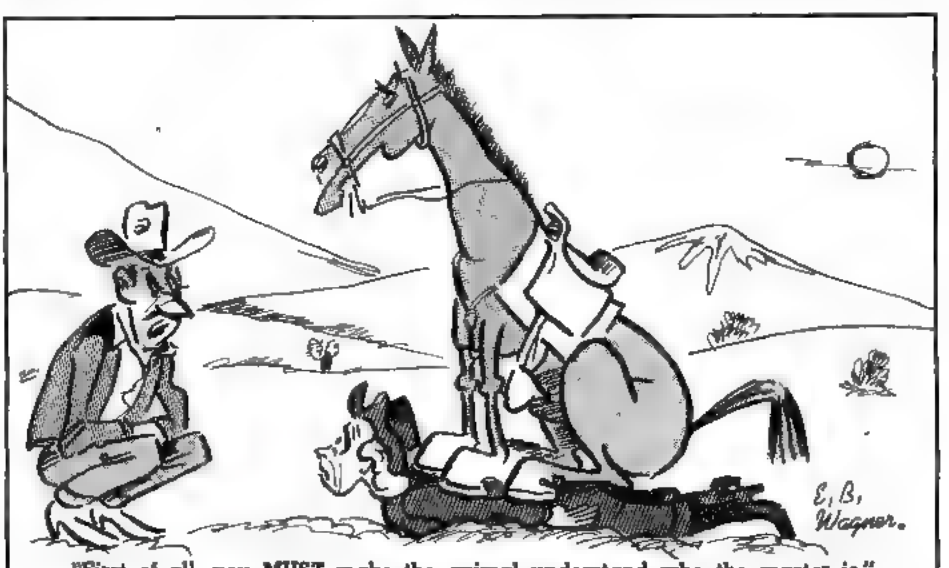
"Your missing witness, Tom Briggs," Tresler informed us, "is in jail, charged with being drunk and disorderly. The hearing is set for three p.m. By that time Briggs will be sober enough to give testimony." He closed his briefcase, got out of his swivel chair, and put on his hat. It was time to meet the deputy sheriff at the hotel and catch the train for Dodson.

THE HEARING took place in Judge Chambers' law office next door to the courtroom which was housed in a large frame building. Spurlock and Wells showed visible signs of bruises on their faces, left by wet rope marks. Spurlock was wearing his spotted calfskin vest which his wife must have cleaned, but he no longer wore the shoulder gun holster. Their attorney was a youngish man with a tall, slender build, wearing tortoise shell glasses. A few years out of a midwest law college, he had come to Montana with the homestead invasion, and had homesteaded on fertile land along the river bottom in Milk River Valley. His name was Harry Smith and he held the title of acting district attorney and was running for re-election. John Tressler had termed him an eager beaver who had a strong dislike for what he called "The Cattle Barons."

Judge Chambers was a tall, lean man with a shock of iron gray hair and a clipped gray mustache, a native Montanan and graduate of Montana University Law School.

In 1911 the town of Dodson was no more than a scatterment of frame buildings along a wide dirt street—a few saloons, a general store, a livery stable, and a hotel. The courtroom had only recently been established. The Skidoo local was the only passenger train that stopped daily, for Dodson at that date had not yet come into its full status of prosperity.

If looks could kill, Spurlock's pale slitted eyes would have killed Jake Myers and me as we entered the room. As John Tressler remarked later, the hearing had all the earmarks of a kangaroo court.



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Both squawmen were duly sworn in, then both positively identified Jake Myers and Walt Coburn as their assailants, in spite of the masks we had worn. First Spurlock, and then John Wells, told his own version of the ruckus, and Spurlock told it plenty scary.

When Tressler produced Exhibit A, the Colt .38 automatic with Spurlock's initials carved on the butt, and Jake Myers testified he had kicked the gun from Spurlock's hand before he had a chance to use it, it cleared Jake who had pleaded self-defense.

Tressler promptly called in Walt Sizer as a surprise witness for the defense, and John Wells under cross-examination was unable to tell if the man whom Jake Myers had called "Walt" was Walt Coburn or Walt Sizer.

Then Deputy Sheriff Ike Neibaur fetched in the now sober Thomas Briggs who identified Walt Coburn as the man who had ridden up just as he had gotten his four-horse team under control after they had run away. Briggs swore that I had not harmed him or his horses in any way.

In the course of the hearing John Tressler made Harry Smith look like a schoolboy with a dunce cap, and in the end Judge Chambers dismissed the charges against me'n Jake, but he put us both under peace bonds for a year. As charges had never been filed against Walt Sizer, he was in the clear.

BRIGGS withdrew his claim to my homestead and Jake hired him and his team of horses to haul winter supplies to the Circle C ranch, and for a few years Briggs stayed on the payroll. Later on, he filed on a homestead near the ranch.

In 1912 a new law was passed, cutting the allotted time for homesteaders to three years, and I got my final papers without anybody contesting my claim.

During one hard, long winter Spurlock and Wells were hard up. Both came to the Circle C begging for work, and willing to bury the hatchet and shake hands as friends. Jake hired them both. After all, Jake explained, the two men had learned their lesson and he felt sorry for their wives and kids. Besides it was a good idea to have a trouble-making squawman like Spurlock working at the ranch where you could keep an eye on him. On the other hand, Wells was a harmless, good-natured sort of gent and a good ranch hand. After all, the only real connection between the two was the fact they had married halfbreed sisters and that made them brothers-in-law.

As for Tom Briggs, he was only one of several luckless homesteaders who were hired by the Circle C outfit when they went broke on a dryland farm. Working for wages enabled Briggs to prove up on the land that he sold later to the outfit. As I recall, there were at least two others —one a former clerk for Marshall Field in St. Paul, the other a bookkeeper in Chicago—who went broke and were hired as bookkeepers at the ranch. The clerk later returned to his former job, and the other man, in later years, had his own store at Zortman.

My disputed homestead claim was the only ruckus we ever had with the dryland homesteaders who were known by such uncomplimentary names as honyakers, scissorbills and nesters.

The experiment of the empire builder, James J. (Jim) Hill, to settle the arid prairie land of Montana was an abortive attempt. "FREE GOVENMENT LAND IN MONTANA" was a false banner which led many a brave and courageous man from the safety of his former home to come west to the Graveyard of Despair.

Where the Mills Turned

(Continued from page 36)

lost and never heard of each other again. Sixty years passed.

It was by the merest chance that J. M. Strickland heard of his sister's whereabouts. His son, the Rev. W. A. Strickland, was pastor of the Baptist Church at Balko, Oklahoma and the Rev. J. Land was pastor at the neighboring town, Forgan, Oklahoma. Rev. Land's father died at Fort Bayard, New Mexico. He went to attend the funeral and met a daughter of Mr. Strickland's sister, who lived at Fort Bayard. It was through this incident that the family was reunited.

Rev. Strickland said his sister was the mother of eleven children and has twenty grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. She was born in 1850 and he in 1853. The other remaining brother is G. W. Strickland of Gravitt, Arkansas. The third brother died in Texas about fifteen years ago.

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Ghostly Happenings

(Continued from page 26)

would. After choking her to death he left the body on the ground, and by a roundabout way, as his tracks revealed, returned to the immigrant camp. Acting not the least unusual, he ate supper at the family wagon and then disappeared.

The murdered girl was missed that night and her body was found the next morning. Another immigrant's best horse and saddle were missing, along with the young man. His constant watching of the slain girl and attempts to engage her in conversation had not passed unnoticed by the people of the train. The story was soon out and an improvised posse set forth trying to overhaul him.

While they were gone the grieving and deserted wife of the culprit went down on the riverbank to where the crime had been committed. When she did not return, her mother went to find her. She was discovered lying dead on the riverside, having killed herself with a hand gun taken from the family wagon.

The immigrant train moved on south over Red River into Texas after failure to come up with the killer—and the very next immigrant train along reported two spirits. The first was seen walking through the sunset toward the river. When spoken to by people she passed, there was no reply. The observers said that her face appeared "like that of a ghost." The same people saw a young woman coming from the river, but when she approached and her features too were like those of a dead person, they realized that she was not the same one who went to the river.

An elderly mother in the group she passed spoke to her, asking if anything were wrong. This time the ghost replied, "It is time to nurse my baby." Then on the very edge of the camp she vanished into thin air.

The following sunset the same performance was repeated. It was then that the immigrants heard from soldiers at the fort of the two tragedies. Somewhat unnerved, the immigrants cut short their rest stop and proceeded on their way.

THE most bizarre of the ghosts appeared during the Civil War. After occupying Fort Washita the Confederate commander maintained scouting patrols in the field, searching and probing for guerrillas, Union troops or marauding Indians who threw in their lot with them. When discovering any of them the scouts maintained surveillance until the commander could rush a force to engage the enemy.

A scouting patrol, consisting of eight Chickasaw and Choctaw Indians and two white soldiers, picked up an Indian trail forty miles from the fort. The group of fifty appeared to have come out of Texas. They were traveling fast toward Kansas and were suspected of being Caddo Indians fleeing north into Union territory. One scout was sent back to the fort with the information.

The band was setting a sharp pace, moving all day long and part of each night before resting. When the party crossed the Kansas border and slowed down, they were definitely identified as Caddoes.

Reinforcements not having caught up, the Confederate scouts decided to turn back to meet the troopers somewhere on the trail and unexpectedly encountered two wagons guarded by ten blue-coated soldiers. The Union soldiers immediately opened fire, which proved unfortunate for them. The scouts killed them to the last man—including the wagon drivers.

On inspecting the contents of the wagons the scouts found four kegs of gold coins which they packed on mules taken from the teams. The wagons were then set afire and the scouts crossed rapidly from Kansas into Indian Territory. Somewhere below the border they collided with a full troop of Union cavalry. In a sharp engagement all the scouts were killed except three Choctaws who fled with the gold-laden mules.

Since pursuit was close and furious, the surviving scouts had to head for timbered mountains and hills to escape. They thus missed the troopers coming north from Fort Washita. Somewhere near where Muskogee now stands a large band of Indians fighting on the Union side hit their camp after dark. In the general confusion of the skirmish, the Choctaws managed to pull out with the mules, but all three men were wounded.

They made it to Blue River before one died and was buried. Going on, the two survivors struck the Washita and followed it downstream on the east side. On the way they sought help at a Choctaw home, where their wounds were treated. Members of the family, whom they knew well, warned them that a roving guerrilla band of white outlaws and renegade Indians was hiding out in the river bottomlands.

A seventeen-year-old girl undertook to guide them around the place where the guerrillas were believed camped. She did so and was about ready to turn back for home when rapid fire was opened on them in thick timber. The Choctaws and the girl took off, running south along the river. The horses and mules were about played out and the pursuing guerrillas could be heard closing in fast. The girl then drove the mules on while the wounded scouts made a stand. The guerrillas plunged straight into the ambush and four were shot out of their saddles. The rest wheeled off and retreated.

The footsore mules were hardly able to travel, and the girl suggested that they rest for a while in a cave in the rocks which she knew. There the kegs of gold were removed from the mules, taken into the cave and buried under a pile of loose stones and rubble. The scouts and the girl started on toward the fort as best they could.

Meanwhile the guerrillas had ridden at high speed and set their own ambush on the river trail. All three—Choctaws and their girl guide—were killed in the first volley from cover. A patrol scouting north of the fort heard the first gunfire, and were so close when the guerrillas struck the second time that they reached

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the scene before the renegades could withdraw. In a sharp fight all but two of the ambushers were killed, and they escaped wounded. The bodies of the scouts and the girl were packed on to Fort Washita and buried.

MONTHS elapsed before information sifted through that the scouting patrol had burned some wagons in Kansas and made off with Union Army gold. But before that, a chilling incident had occurred at Fort Washita.

One night a sergeant's wife was washing the supper dishes. The kitchen door of the two-room cabin outside the fort grounds stood wide open for air circulation. Although hearing no sound, she had an uneasy feeling and glanced at the door. Just beyond the threshold stood an Indian girl. Motioning at the white woman she said, "Come with me and I will show you where the Yankee gold is hidden."

The woman screamed and fainted to the puncheon floor. Her husband and two friends, sitting in the next room, rushed into the kitchen, found the unconscious woman, and after some time revived her. When she told what had happened they comforted her, but were sure that she had had hallucinations (especially when no tracks were found at daylight).

A month later the same Indian girl stood outside the door of a married lieutenant's quarters. His wife, hearing a peculiar noise, opened the door and the lamplight from inside fell on her visitor. When she was asked what she wanted, the Indian girl replied, "If you will come with me I will show you the Yankee gold." The officer's wife smiled and said no, whereupon the girl, looking very sad, turned away. She took no more than two steps before vanishing.

The girl was described in detail, especially her long braided hair. Troopers who had brought the bodies of the scouts and the girl in for burial declared she was surely the same one. Confounding the situation then was receipt of bits of information about the gold taken from the wagon in Kansas, plus the account as given by the slain girl's family. The family's information was the first concrete evidence that the gold had almost reached Fort Washita. Patrols were dispatched to the scene of the guerrilla fight and an intensive search made, but no gold was found.

The girl did not appear again until just before the Confederates abandoned Fort Washita ahead of a large force of Union troops. While they were packing up in a hurry one moonlight night she accosted no less than the commanding officer on the grounds. Again she offered to lead the way to the hidden gold. The officer told her to wait until he got some help to bring it in—but when he returned, the girl was gone.

From the end of the Civil War until about 1890 fragmentary reports were circulated of ghostly appearances and mysterious things happening around the old fort. From that year on, with the Indian Territory settling up, floating heads and the mysterious forms of women were reported more and more often.

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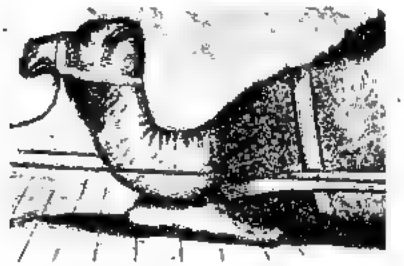

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Parties of young people would go to the fort and sit up all night waiting to see one or more of the manifestations.

Susanne Meador wrote, "Charley Colbert and his brother-in-law, Edgel Davis, ranged cattle around the fort. Charley often said that while everyone else seemed to see the ghosts anytime, he never did but that one time. He said that he read ghost stories every night scaring himself and hoping to see one of the ghosts again. But all he ever saw was the two women walking towards the Denison road when his buggy horse ran away with him and Jim Yarber."

Parties of people who went to the fort to wait overnight or to camp for several days, deliberately did so to see one or more of the ghosts. By 1895 more and more people witnessed one or more ghosts or a human head floating in the air, but no harmful events occurred until in the spring.

SETTLERS in that region purchased their supplies in Denison. One family returning from a trading trip in a wagon decided to camp near the fort as dusk turned into night. On close approach to the ruined walls the team spooked. The horses were almost out of control when one of the family hissed a warning, pointing at the nearest stone wall. Between it and the road two women dressed in white seemed to be floating along just above the ground. The family had a good look before the frightened team bolted.

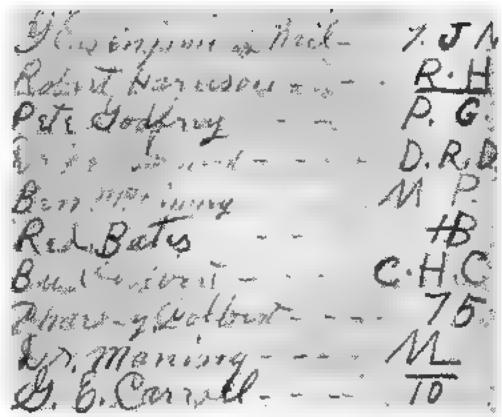
Hurtling along the road, the team slashed off to one side into scattered timber and crashed into a tree. The wagon rolled over as the team broke free with the tongue and raced away. In the spill the mother of the family and two small children were killed.

Soon afterwards farm homes in the vicinity were visited by the ghosts, some as far away as five miles. In the night a knock would sound on a door—not the usual rap with knuckles but a sort of banging on the frame when no wind whatever stirred. On going to the door to investigate, the homeowner would find the Indian girl standing there. She always said the same thing that she had said so many decades before.

The youngest victim at Fort Washita would also be found before a farmhouse door, but she never spoke a word. After staring sadly at whoever answered the curious sound, she would turn and vanish. The third woman who supposedly visited farm houses would say, "I want to find my baby."

The less superstitious believed for a while that someone was playing cruel tricks on the Indians, halfbreeds and white farmers. Traps were laid, constant watching went on, but nothing concrete developed. By this time the farmers and their families were in various states of apprehension. When the first one moved away, deserting his home in fear of supernatural visitors, others soon followed. Charley Colbert, who was a descendant of the famous Winchester Colbert, bought up most of these farms and Indian allotments.

So often were the ghosts seen that



Various cattle brands used by ranchers who lived around old Fort Washita as recorded by Susanne Meador.

travelers on the Denison road made certain of not being caught anywhere near the old fort around sundown or after dark. In July a man and his wife driving a buckboard to Denison to buy supplies camped the first night from home about three miles above Fort Washita. Wanting to complete their journey as quickly as possible, they arose before daylight, ate breakfast, harnessed the two horses and rolled south. The sun was just coming up on a cloudy, rain-threatening day when they drew abreast of the fort ruins. Suddenly the team snorted and swerved left off the road and broke into a run out of control. The man, who was driving, saw a man's head floating along just above the ground as the buckboard wheeled off the road.

The bolting team crashed into some gray rocks, completely demolishing the buckboard. The man's wife was killed. This tragic accident threw the country into a real uproar. The ghost stories had spread far beyond the immediate region. Susanne chronicled what happened next. "A young reporter whom we knew well, Russell Noble, came up and after investigating the truth of the ghost stories, wrote a long article that appeared in the Denison *Herald*."

AFTER publication of his story a clairvoyant contacted Charley Colbert. She informed him that she could not only get rid of the ghosts but make him a rich man by telling where the Yankee gold was hidden. She came to his ranch at Fort Washita, and according to Colbert, a story he related amusedly for many years, "She was good all right, a table walker, so I tested her by asking that she send the table toward the sister whom I liked the least. She did just that, but she could never tell me where the gold was!"

All sorts of ghost hunters and plain cranks descended on the area, intent on halting the spirit business—for a big fee, of course. A number fell for their schemes. One charlatan, a man, claimed that after seven days of effort he had gone into a trance and contacted the ghosts. They agreed to leave the country and return permanently to where they were supposed to be. For a solid month after he was paid off and gone, a close

watch was kept on Fort Washita. No ghosts were seen and the populace beban breathing easier. But their relief was short-lived.

A cowboy working for Colbert and Davis, then running the 75 brand, crossed the Washita River headed for the home ranch one sunset. No sooner did his dripping horse emerge from the water than it leaped into a wild run and smashed into a tree. The cowboy fell to the ground with a broken neck, where he was found after his horse reached the ranch. He lived long enough to say, "I saw this floating woman ghost before my horse took off. She came up close and said something to me. That was when my horse bolted."

Stunned over the tragedy, Colbert sought some means of laying the ghosts to rest forever. He, too, had seen what looked like two ghosts with Yarber, but he hardly believed in spirits, despite the experience.

Ben McKinney who owned the M. P. cattle ranch, answered a knock on his front door about ten o'clock one night. Since outlaws were often in the country hiding from federal officers, he never went to the door without a gun in his hand. This time he saw the Indian girl ghost standing before him. Quick as a flash he fired once, then twice more almost point-blank into the girl. Then McKinney slammed the door. A few minutes later he got the cold shivers, afraid that he had actually killed a real person, perhaps one of his neighbors' daughters.

The rest of the family had rushed into the front room after the shots. Now shaking in great dread, the rancher got a lantern and with the others carrying lamps, went to the spot before the doorway. No body was lying on the ground; no evidence of tracks disturbed the soft soil around the house. Nor were there any blood spots leading out of the yard which surely would have been present had the visitor merely been wounded. After this news circulated, no one opened a door after nightfall unless the visitor yelled his identity from a distance.

Susanne told the badly worried Colbert of a "Sanctified Church" woman preacher named Elizabeth (Betty) Copeland who lived at Alvarado, Texas. A meeting was called, attended by a number of people. It was arranged to pool money, erect a large arbor, and send for the woman preacher. She agreed to hold a camp meeting to see if she could do anything about the ghosts.

Arriving in August Betty Copeland started her series of preaching and singing meetings. Every night she prayed that the ghosts would remove themselves from the community. The crowds grew larger and larger. At the end of three weeks she said that it was not certain but she thought the ghosts would never appear again.

Wrote Susanne, "I suppose she did get rid of the ghosts as none of them were ever seen afterwards. I heard her preach at Fort Washita, and several years later at Alvarado."

Colbert acquired the site of old Fort Washita and repaired some of the build-

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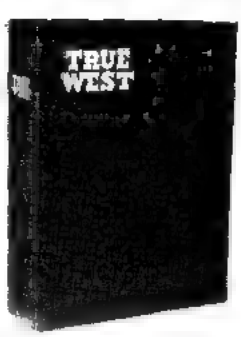

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ings. His family lived in one of them for several years, and Colbert resided there to the day of his death in 1951 at age ninety-two. During all that time neither he nor any of his family saw a single ghost. No one else did either, so perhaps the woman preacher put the Indian sign on them.

Ghost stories relating to Fort Washita, now a state historical site, still abound, but there has been no reliable witness to either the floating head or the women ghosts for many years.

Peg Leg

(Continued from page 48)

the other eye out for Peg Leg. Children were frightened by the very mention of his name.

Descriptions of Peg Leg are vague, at best. He apparently was of medium height, medium age, and medium coloring. And he always carried a huge pack on his back.

A. A. "DUTCH" DILLMAN, a treasured friend of mine, was living on the north slope of the Peaks during the years when Peg Leg roamed. Dutch well remembered seeing Peg Leg pass their ranch for the last time in the summer of 1912. Dutch's description of Peg Leg's appearance is as vague as the others, yet Dutch has spent years in the woods and ordinarily can see a turkey or deer where no one else could.

However, he can remember the imprint of Peg Leg's wooden leg perfectly and describes it as round and smooth in the soft dirt of the road. His memory dispels the widespread rumor that Peg Leg wore an old shoe on the shaft of the wooden leg, turned backward to baffle pursuit. This rumor was, of course, nonsense. Even the most unskilled of trackers could have told at once by the scuffed dirt, the broken weeds or dislodged pebbles which way Peg Leg was going. Dean Eldridge of Flagstaff had on display in his museum a wooden leg claimed to be Peg Leg's. Attached to the shaft was a shoe—old, shrunken and distorted in the manner of all old shoes. Others claim Peg Leg's wooden leg was laid to rest with him.

On the afternoon Dutch saw Peg Leg pass the Dillman ranch he watched him continue up the mountain to a ranch known then as the Hart place, and saw him make camp close by. Shortly afterward a chuckwagon with some cowboys in attendance passed the Dillman ranch headed in the direction of the Hart place. Peg Leg, on seeing the wagon's approach, hurriedly stuffed his gear into his pack and disappeared.

The next morning the cowboys, now accompanied by a county ranger, Ed Johnson, traveled farther up the mountain to what was then known as the "Wild Bill" cabin. As they approached, Peg Leg ran out of the only door to the cabin. Johnson jumped from his horse and, ordering Peg Leg to throw up his hands, moved forward. Instead of complying with Johnson's order Peg Leg reached under his shirt as though to grab a gun. The ranger fired, his bullet striking Peg Leg in the forehead, between the eyes, and killing him instantly. Peg Leg died as he lived, silently.

Peg Leg did have a gun beneath his shirt. It was an old, inexpensive, nickel-plated revolver and there are those that say it would not have harmed a cat unless one threw it at him. The body was left where it had fallen and a rider was dispatched to fetch the sheriff. When the sheriff arrived the body was thoroughly searched. Nothing could be found that bore Peg Leg's name or any clue to his identity. The pack contained only food, a few pieces of clothing, battered cooking utensils, and a sawed-off shotgun.

Peg Leg was taken to Flagstaff and for three days the body lay in a local hardware store in the hope that it might be identified. Nothing. There were rumors that a stranger, bearing a resemblance to Peg Leg came to the store's window several times and looked at him sadly. If it is true, he never entered the place.

The death of Peg Leg seemed only to deepen the mystery. Why had he attempted to draw a gun on the ranger? Was Peg Leg deaf and dumb—unable to understand the ranger's command? Had he been attempting to merely surrender the gun? Or was Peg Leg mentally unbalanced? The thought must have crossed the ranger's mind and caused him many a sleepless night. Law officers might be required to shoot people at times but they are not required to enjoy it.

Looking back, Peg Leg's death seems so unnecessary. The most serious charge which could have been brought against him was petty theft. Had he waved or stopped to jaw a little with the people living around the Peaks they would have feared him not at all. He might have been "wanted" elsewhere but so were many people in Arizona. No one could blame Johnson; it was a period when, if a man reached for a gun, it was unlikely he intended to polish it.

Peg Leg was buried in the old Flagstaff Cemetery, but later moved and his gravesite is lost. Peg Leg's silence remains unbroken. Maybe he wanted it that way. Dying, for him, might have been easier than living with his fellow men. I've always wished though, every time I've heard the story, that the lonely man could have been buried on his mountain. He must have loved it a very great deal.

I Danced with Belle Starr

(Continued from page 20)

Tahlequah, Cherokee Nation, having learned from some of the rough characters there that it was one of her hangouts. After loitering around there a few days without any luck, I lit out for a little place called Briartown near the Arkansas River, but failed to see her there. I gave up then and fell back to the southern part of the Chickasaw Nation to a creek called Pecan Bayou. This was about thirty miles from the north Texas line. I was getting desperately short of money and had to hunt a job. Finally I ran into a man named

Osavior. He was a mixture of Indian, Mexican and American. He was a clever horse and cattle buyer and was buying horses to be sent to the Eastern market. Many of them weren't broke, and he told me if I could ride well he would give me a job busting these broncs.

Feeling myself master of most any bad horse, I told him I'd try one then he could be the judge. I stayed all night with Osavior, and next morning he took me out to the corral where his newly bought horses were. Being what I thought was a keen judge of horses, I saw one with a brown streak down its back, his nose all blared open. His eyes looked glassy, and he was constantly kicking up with his hind feet, or pawing with his forefeet at the horses in the pen. All this time he was trying to hide from both Osavior and myself. I knew at once he was the horse Osavior was going to pick for me. He turned to me, looked me in the eye and said, "Old boy, that brown-backed horse is the one I'd like to see you ride."

I will never forget how fair he talked to me. He said he realized I was aware that the horse was bad, but he wanted me to bring that particular one out so there would be no more wrangling about my riding ability. I rode in, roped him, brought him out in the clear of the other horses and Osavior very kindly helped me to saddle. After oozing him out of the gate the way was open into a little field. I got on the horse with every precaution for I was sure he was going to jump mighty high. He took me two or three jumps into the field, then stopped stiff-legged and began to do his best. I don't think with my many years of experience I ever had a horse to pitch harder. After he had been pitched down, I spurred him and rode him every imaginable way that a wild, mean outlaw horse could be rode. He was wet with sweat and exhausted. I soon got him to where I could handle him nicely. When he was completely worn out and refused to buck further, I got off. Osavior said I'd done a good job and he'd give me a job breaking his horses.

After working there for several weeks, helping to buy, break and sell, I learned to think a great deal of Osavior. Several times we took horses down to Paris, Texas, to sell and it seemed that every time we got down there we heard something about Belle Starr and her gang of horsethieves. We kept up these trips for a few months and Osavior was making money. But he had a great dread all this time that the horsethieves would break in on him, and he kept a certain little pasture for his horses to run in.

LIKE myself, Osavior was raised in the West, and knew a lot of the tricks of thieves. He was one of the closest observers of the nature of bad characters I ever met. One time after we had gone up on Wild Horse Creek some forty or fifty miles north, we rounded up a nice bunch of horses, about twenty-five head. Out of this number there were only three that needed riding. After I'd broke these three, we turned them into the little pasture close to the house, expecting

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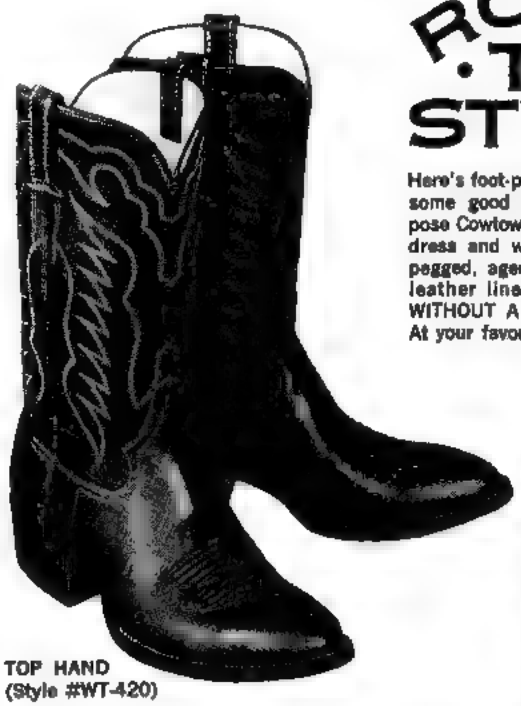

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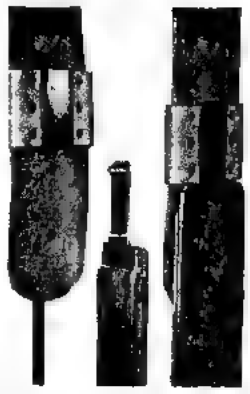

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to drive them to market in about three weeks.

We'd had them in there about two weeks when some horsethieves came one night and tore down most of the back string of fence farthest from the house. Next morning all the horses were gone, and we didn't know which way to start. We saw the tracks of a man with extra large shoes. We now had a parley. I asked Osavior if he thought it was really a large man. That was another old trick of the thief. We agreed that it was more likely the man had a little foot instead of a large one and was wearing a large shoe.

Within an hour or two's ride we found several horses. This was another trick to make the owner think he would eventually find all of them in the community. It was a great habit with them to take part and leave part, but they always took the best ones.

We put in one full day but only rounded up about ten horses. We decided then that fifteen or so had been taken away. We were so bewildered over the situation that we didn't know for the time being which way to turn. We thought it might be Comanche Indians; also mentioned the Starr gang. We talked things over that night about what we thought might reveal a clue. After the wear and tear of the night, next morning we got up, had breakfast, and rode down to Red River, about thirty miles south. We had finally decided that it might be Texas thieves as they often broke into the Indian country to steal so that it would be blamed on Territory thieves.

We decided on this trip south in order to clear up that thought first. Horsethieves never went to a ferry. They always forded or swam their horses to cross a river. We split up when we got to the Red. I rode upriver and Osavior rode east. Each rode about twenty-five miles then met at the starting point the next day. We then went back to Osavior's, and after spending the night, rode northeast to the Washita River, thinking we might line them out, being suspicious by this time that the thieves might be the Starr gang. After going as far as Mannsville, we turned back home again. Osavior was getting pretty blue and was about to give up. I told him I believed it was either Indians out of the Comanche Nation, or squawmen.

AFTER resting up a day or two, I asked him to let's try that theory out. In something like two days we lit out with fresh horses to the Comanche Nation. The second day Osavior seemed to be more hopeful because we passed several fellows that had the look of horsethieves. The third night the country looked so tough we were afraid to put up in any of the shacks, and camped out. On the following day, half-way between Fort Sill and Fort Reno and a few miles south of the Little Washita, while riding a divide between two draws looking for tracks, we met a man that had a typical look of a keen horsethief —long hair, small feet and a hard look. We passed him, one on either side, riding in a slow jog and watching for him to look back. We both saw him look back at us and I looked over at Osavior and saw him smile for the first time since his horses had been stolen. I asked him why he was smiling and he told me he felt sure we were within two or three miles of his horses.

Thieves usually hid horses in timbered draws and men rode high ground to scout the country watching for pursuers. If the thief was caught with the horses he'd likely be killed, but he would be unmolested riding on a trail or away from the horses. We now felt sure our horses were nearby in one of the draws, either to the right or to the left. After we had passed this man on the trail about a mile, we dashed into the left draw first. We got in a hurry because we knew things had to be done fast to avoid a battle.

The man we had met on the trail doubtless ran fast for the rendezvous to get reinforcements as soon as he got out of our sight. We failed in the first draw, and rushed back over the little divide, about a fourth of a mile below, into the right hand draw. Here we ran into our horses and found twelve. We ran them back up the draw in the direction of home without being molested, but I believe if the man had ever gotten to his gang they would have surrounded us and we'd have had to fight our way out. This man was a sentinel. Gangs usually went to their dives and huts and left one man to guard the horses and scout the high country. We drove rapidly that afternoon and night, then took our time. The recovered horses were fresh and we had no trouble returning them to Pecan Bayou and they were soon put on the market.

After staying with Osavior another two or three weeks, I pulled out for the Cherokee Nation. Being a rambler, I seldom stayed long in one place. Soon my finances were getting low again and I found that I'd have to get work if I expected to eat regular. Finally I came to a ranch on the Verdigris River near Fort Gibson which had the appearance of honest ownership. When I asked the proprietor, Mr. Wilcox, for a job, he sized me up and I guess judged me to be honest and asked me if I could ride. After assuring him that I could, he told me that he had a bunch of horses to break before delivering them to market in Fort Smith, and he was anxious to get them away on account of the thieves. I showed him my ability to stick on the wild ones and he told me I had a job for the winter if I cared to stay.

TOM, Mr. Wilcox's oldest son, and myself became quite chummy. Being about the same age and both fond of country dances, we managed to attend all within riding distance. I expressed my desire to meet Belle Starr and he assured me that I would have the opportunity if I attended the dances, as she and her gang hung out a great deal along the Verdigris, Grand and Arkansas Rivers. He also told me that the Starr gang had a habit of stealing the horses of the dancers. I certainly didn't care to lose my horse in that manner

so we agreed that while one danced the other would guard the horses.

We soon heard of a dance about ten miles up the Verdigris and were told on good authority that Belle would be there. Young Wilcox, as well as myself, had always had a burning desire to meet Belle, so early that evening we saddled and rode hard to be there early. We hadn't been there very long before Belle and four men rode up. It gave me a thrill as I watched her hang her quirt and spurs on her saddle before she entered the house with queenly grace.

We were both out by our horses and had an argument about who should go in first as one of us had to be on the lookout. The men remained outside and certainly gave us and our horses their close attention. Young Wilcox said one of them was Sam Starr, and another fellow called Blue Duck; the others were unknown to him. We had an argument as to who should dance first, but being good-natured I finally agreed to let him go if he would come back before long.

It seemed to me he was gone three hours. He swore it was only fifteen minutes and, in turn, asked me not to stay long.

Belle Starr seemed to be a cultured lady, and she was certainly a graceful dancer. The night passed all too soon and without incident—except our quarrels as to who stayed the longest in our turn at dancing. The Starr gang, seeing us go in one at a time, realized that we were watching our horses close and they did not attempt anything.

When the night was over we went back to the ranch. All we could talk about was Belle. She was the topic of conversation for several days. We went to several little dances close by, for some two or three weeks. Then we finally heard of a dance about fifteen miles up the river. We were sure Belle would be there and she was. She remembered us both and seemed glad to see us. She was ready to dance and have a good time, and we were willing to fuss over who would watch the horses. The same men were with her and the way they eyed us didn't make me feel any too comfortable.

About three o'clock in the morning while I was standing guard, I saw a man stealthily approaching with a knife in his hand. These fellows never took time to untie, but cut the horses loose. I was standing behind a good-sized tree and I suppose he thought I had abandoned my post. When he got close enough and was about to cut my horse loose, I shoved my gun in his face.

"Drop that knife and shove your hands high," I ordered, but kept my voice down. "It ain't healthy to whittle on my tie rope."

He saw that he was trapped and didn't waste any time obeying. Just then the music stopped and Tom came out to relieve me. As he stepped in the light of the door a shot was fired from the trees to my right and I saw him drop. At the same instant my prisoner's right hand streaked for his gun, but I peeled his scalp with the barrel of my six-gun. He dropped like a rock. The other men had probably noticed their confed-

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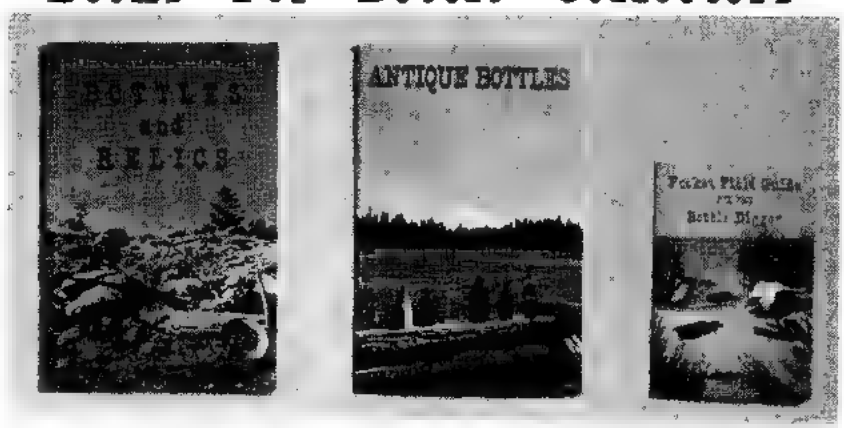

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erate with his hands up and, seeing Tom coming to my aid, decided to fight because that class of men would rather get killed than be carried to face a trial in Judge Parker's court in Fort Smith.

THE HORSES were r'aring and snorting from the noise and confusion. I heard footsteps running through the trees but I could see nothing to shoot at as the dim starlight did not penetrate the shadows. I realized that I was in a precarious predicament. Surrounded by three or more unseen, desperate enemies, I was left to fight my way out alone.

One of the men discovered my position and a bullet cut the bark from the tree too close to my head for comfort. I fired at the flash and a regular battle was on. Each time I fired I jumped to change my position, but in spite of this precaution one bullet cut my shirt and another took off my right thumb at the first joint, sending my gun spinning through the darkness. My plight was getting more desperate and discouraging. I dropped to my hands and knees and began feeling over the ground for my gun, and after a seeming age found it—only to discover that the bullet had permanently put it out of commission.

While examining it and bemoaning my hard luck, I heard footsteps right at me and at the same time heard the cocking of a gun. I looked up and saw a man standing almost over me with a gun in his hand. My heart sank but in desperation I resolved to do my best to protect myself. Just as I was about to dive into his legs to upset him, he asked:

"Is that you, Bob?"

"Yes, but I thought you were killed, Tom," I answered joyfully.

"Not even hit," he laughed. "I dropped and rolled over to get out of the light."

He told me afterward that he had circled around toward the horses to find me but not knowing friend from foe had been unable to fire.

Suddenly I remembered the gun of the outlaw I'd beefed, and made haste to appropriate it. Someone had shot out the lights in the house and there was general pandemonium. Men were rushing around seeking their horses and others, mounted, were making hasty departures.

"Cut the horses loose and let's get out of here while the stampede's on," I said, after I'd gotten the gun from the outlaw's holster.

The confusion probably saved our lives, for with men running everywhere no one could tell friend from foe. After mounting our excited horses with difficulty, we kept to the shadows as much as possible and made our way toward home. About three miles down the road we heard hoofbeats in our rear, and not knowing who it might be, thought it best to draw off in the brush and wait until they passed.

When they got almost opposite us we heard a woman's laugh which I recognized as Belle Starr's. "Sam," she said, "you fellows let a kid stand off the whole crowd. One of you got a broken arm and another a broken head."

That was cheerful news to me and was a little compensation for the pain in my thumb.

"Just a kid," she continued, "but how he could dance! The next time I go I'll leave you boys home so I can have him all to myself," and she laughed again as they passed from hearing.

The sky was beginning to lighten in the east so we waited until they were several miles away for fear of being recognized.

"And how he could dance!" mocked Tom with a laugh.

To tell you the truth, I was grateful for her compliment, and knew that if the opportunity offered I'd go through the same thing again for the privilege of dancing with such a charming woman. I never saw her again and though I am no longer a kid, I have never ceased to regret that the next time "so I can have him all to myself" never came.

Fort Reno in 1893. Buildings in background are presumably officers' quarters.

Trails Grown Dim

(Continued from page 48)

law in north-central Texas five miles from Alexander on the Dublin road. He possibly worked as a farmer or farmhand around 1887. Please send any information.—Linda McBroom, Box 735, Lufkin, Texas 75901

Gun or Gunn

I would like to locate my grandfather, Robert (Rafe) Gun (or Gunn) and my uncle, Alvin Gun (nicknamed Doc or Dock). Grandmother Gun passed away when my mother was five. She went to live with Caroline and Richard Baker. Grandfather later married Mattie Duncan who had two sons, Halburton (Hal) and Phillip. They lived in Greenville, Mississippi and were last heard from in 1900. Grandfather worked for the railroad in Greenville and was a deacon in the Methodist Church there. My mother lost contact with her people when she and my father moved to Kansas and later to California. I would appreciate hearing from anyone related to or knowing anything about my mother's people. My mother's name is Minnie Pearl Gun.—R. A. Jennings, 4710 Oasis Road, Redding, California 96001

Walter H. Weld

About seventy or eighty years ago my grandfather, Walter H. Weld, moved from New Hampshire to Colorado and married Mary E. Munro from Whitewater, Colorado. They settled in Fruita, Mesa County, Colorado. I have tried to trace my grandfather's predecessors in New Hampshire but with no luck—not even a birth certificate on him.—Roger S. Weld, 3864 South Miner, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53221

Munn

I would like to hear from anyone interested in this family and will swap what information I have for information on Asa Munn, born 1822, and John Munn, father of six children, who died in Muscatine, Iowa in 1896. Does anyone know the names of the children? What were the names of the brothers of Asa and John? Were they brothers? I will send a copy of the history I have been working on for ten years.—Florence Munn Mooneyham, 24 Cedar Street, Central Point, Oregon 97501

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James Daniel married Martha Francis Williams in Gwinnett County, Georgia in 1848 and he was back in Texas before 1860. His family consisted of seven children: Mary Abbigail, who married William Pomphrett Stanphill in Hill County in 1869; Henry Clay, died young; Richard Shelton, who was burned by

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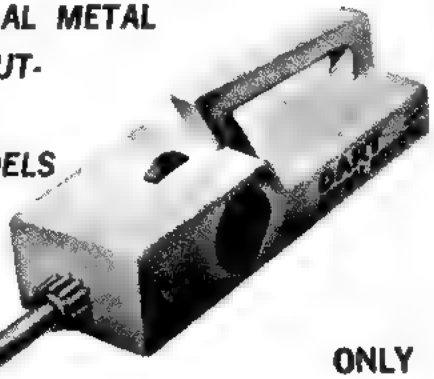

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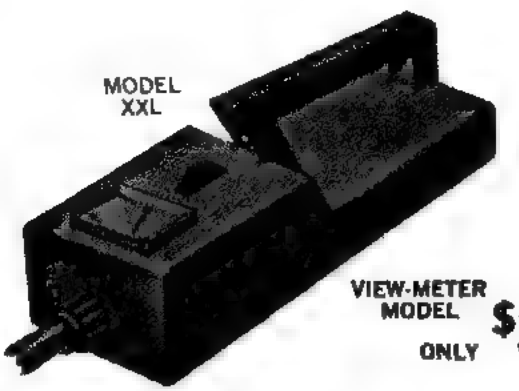

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falling in a fire but lived to be twenty-four; John Hancock, died young; Martha Jane; James Daniel Jr., and Sam Houston Taylor. James Daniel Sr. served in the Civil War, enlisting in Panola County. James Daniel Sr. and Jr. never stayed in any one place very long. James Jr. married Eliza Jane Vaughan in Hardeman County in 1890. Part of this family lived in Coleman County for some time.—Mrs. Virginia T. Van Ness, Route 1, Burton, Texas 77835

Rudd-Clark

I am searching for information on the Rudd family. The 1790 North Carolina census lists William Rudd in Halifax County. Two children are known of and I would like to know of any others and their descendants. Son Nathaniel and daughter Rebecca Rudd (and possibly more of their family) lived somewhere in Tennessee. They married a sister and brother, Nancy and Thomas Clark (who were originally from Spa, Kentucky, children of James Clark, a school teacher from Rhode Island). Nathaniel and Nancy Rudd and Rebecca and Thomas Clark moved to Carroll County, Arkansas in early 1830s. Would like to contact Rudds in North Carolina or Tennessee for history prior to 1930s or of current families there.—Velma Rudd Hoffman, Box 116, Grand Canyon, Arizona 86023

Greenwood

I am a descendant of George and Margaret Greenwood who lived in Ontario, Canada and had eleven children born in Waterloo, Ontario: John, Jennie, Mary, Vick, Richard, Samuel George, Belle, Alberta, William, and James, my grandfather.

We have no record at all on William or Alberta. All we know about Belle is that she married a John Mertz and moved out West. Some of these eleven Greenwoods moved into the United States, some remained in Canada. I would appreciate just any information on these relatives.—Jack W. Greenwood, Oswego, Montana 59251

Morgan-Scott-Brooks

I have a picture of Melinda Morgan and her husband, John J. Scott, that was taken by White and James, Miami, Indian Territory and was sent to my great-grandmother (her sister), Mary Jane Morgan Brooks who had moved from Fayette County, Iowa to Oregon. Mary Jane was born November 11, 1832. They were reared in Missouri and later moved to Iowa. There was a brother Archie twenty years older than Mary Jane. I would appreciate any information on these people and would like to correspond with any of their descendants.—Mrs. James Jeffries, Box 287, Canyonville, Oregon 97417

Tracy-Tucker

Do any readers have any information on Jonothan Tracy or Thomas Tucker? They were in the North Carolina 9th and 10th Regiments in the American Revolution in 1777.—Nathan Tracy, 380 Grey Street, Denver Colorado 80226

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100 Hours of Terror

(Continued from page 30)

the warden's office. They move the critically wounded Delahunty to his room for treatment but he is beyond help, and dies while Wilson holds his hand.

Now the telephone operator for the warden's office flashes word to Lincoln's chief of police, to the Lancaster (Lincoln) County sheriff, and to Governor Chester Aldrich in a small town some seventy-five miles away. Inside the prison, T. E. Slattery, veteran of prison management in several states, orders cellblock guards to move all inmates quickly into their own cells before the prisoners grasp the situation, get unruly, or perhaps outright mutinous.

One by one the shops and work-stations are mysteriously shut down at midday, and the baffled prisoners are quickly marched to their night quarters. The men have heard the uproar, the shouting, and some of the scurrying, and soon they're dangerously suspicious. Just before the last group is locked up, the Big House grapevine has flashed the news. Suddenly the men curse and yell as they march defiantly to a lockup at midafternoon; later some of these men will weep unashamedly when word is passed of Square Jim's death.

WITH THREE DESPERATE convicts loose, the community springs to the chase. Governor Aldrich phones Adjutant General Phelps and orders him and some men from Company F, state militia, to put the prison under martial law and to assist all possemen. The Lancaster County sheriff swears in twenty deputies at one stroke, some of whom are newspapermen hurrying to the scene. Lincoln Police Chief Munger gives extra-hour duties to his men, and Chief of Detectives John Schmidt has eight men assigned to the case. C. E. Johnson, chief of Nebraska's bankers association secret service, assigns almost all his men to hunting down the expert safeblower, Gray—should he seek to knock off a safe to finance his party's escape. The Burlington Railroad puts all its secret agents on the case. Surrounding counties offer top lawmen and hundreds of volunteer possemen to state officials.

Fearing other convicts might have guns concealed within the gray walls, all inmates are kept locked in their cells. They shake and pound celldoors in their anger. Outside, the wives of Gray and Morley are put under surveillance, and Dowd's known acquaintances are checked hourly. Persons to whom Gray recently mailed money orders are also being watched.

But the most dangerous force operating against the killers is the weather. For, unknown to the schemers behind the prison walls, this Thursday afternoon a powerful Nebraska blizzard is raging outside—the kind which has taken many a man's life. Intercity travel has shifted to trains, and all have guarded vestibules to ward off entry by the desperadoes. In the country, men ride horses and battle deep snow.

About an hour after racing through the prison gates, the three convicts are knocking at the door of Joseph Dickman of 2709 Van Dorn Street at the edge of Lincoln. Dickman is a retail dairyman. His wife is alone at home and unaware of what has happened. As she opens the door she sees three wet, disheveled and almost frozen men. "Won't you all come in?" she asks hospitably and with a touch of pity.

"Thanks, ma'am," Replies Dowd in his most courteous voice.

They come inside the living room, and seat themselves in a defensive semi-circle. "We won't hurt you or your family if they do exactly as we say and let no one know we are here," begins Gray in his softest voice.

It is obvious Mrs. Dickman has not heard of the murders and the prison break. So Gray tells her the situation quickly and briefly, without mentioning the killings.

"All we want is some shelter and some food," affirms Morley.

Facing three desperate and dangerous men, Mrs. Dickman remains remarkably cool and brave. "Can you milk a cow?" she asks. "I've got to milk now or all our customers and neighbors will suspect something."

Dowd and Morley, non-milkers, accompany her to her barn and assist by throwing down feed from the haymow. Gray, staying in the house, watches the premises. Soon the chores are done and Mrs. Dickman and her two "guards" return to the house just as the two Dickman sons return home. Dowd pulls down the shades; orders everyone to be quiet. Gray asks the lads if they have heard any news of the killings earlier in the afternoon. They say yes.

Still steel-nerved, Mrs. Dickman prepares and serves supper to her family, with Dowd and Morley eating at the table. From the front room Gray is watching the approaches to the house.

Now Dowd orders one of the boys to hitch up the horse-drawn delivery wagon and to drive him and his pals into Lincoln. The convicts stroke the horses and apologize for taking them out into a raging blizzard. The trio then shake hands with the Dickmans and thank them for their hospitality. "Don't tell anyone we've been here or the boy who's driving us to town may never return alive," they add warningly.

In midtown Lincoln the delivery wagon gets stuck in a treacherous snow-filled ditch. A husky man, with the casual help of some passersby, assists the lad with his cargo of concealed escapees. They push and rock the wagon free.

"I'm sure much obliged," says young Dickman, gratefully. "If you tell me your name, my dad will call and settle with you."

"That's all right, son. I'm Chief of Police Munger—and my wife won't mind my being late for supper because I gave you a hand. Good luck."

BY NOW, every farmer is riding horseback in belly-deep snow as he answers requests from lawmen to search every haystack, every feedshed, every barn and shelter on his land. Town police men are searching every bit of cover in their towns. Railroad tracks—the only

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really passable thoroughfares—are patrolled for strange hikers.

After young Dickman reports that the escapees have leaped out of his dairy wagon in midtown Lincoln and plunged into the raging snowstorm, there are no further clues.

Early Monday morning, a Murdock, Nebraska, hardware store—in a village on a country road some twenty-five miles northeast of Lincoln—reports itself robbed of shotguns, ammunition and "warm" hunters' clothing. Later three men are seen walking the railroad tracks going into the neighboring village of South Bend. All these points lie between Lincoln and Omaha.

Fortunately, at least three posses are churning through the snowbound countryside in this area: militiamen under Lt. Gelhaar; a twenty-five-civilian posse; and twelve men under Lancaster County Sheriff Hyers. Within striking distance are posses under Lincoln Fire Commissioner Trouton, South Omaha Police Chief Briggs, and Sarpy County Sheriff Case.

Railroad handcars are quickly commandeered to cross the Platte River which meanders through here. The three convicts are tracked through the snow to the farm of young Roy Blunt, a bridegroom of two months. Actually, the three killers, failing at gunpoint to get a late breakfast (11:00 a.m.), set their own trap. They face Mrs. Blunt.

"I'm alone," explains winsome young Mrs. Blunt. "You'll have to wait here until I run out to the henhouse for some eggs."

Worn out by wading the snow and bucking the high wind, the battered men sink into kitchen chairs and wait. The young wife never returns. Instead, she flees across the snowy fields to a neighboring farm and phones the alarm.

Now the bridegroom comes home—to face three suspicious and dangerously excited gunmen. He confesses he doesn't know where his wife went.

"Well, if you know what's good for you, you'd better get us out of here," he is told. "Harness up a wagon—or something we can hide in—and take us out of the county."

Dowd and Morley seize Blunt's arm and manhandle him out to the barn. He hitches up a team and wagon-bobsled. Gray stays in the farmhouse and writes a desperate note: "We have taken your neighbor for a hostage. If you do not follow us or report the matter, he will not be harmed."

Suddenly—with Gray, Dowd and Morey, their pistols ready, lying hidden in the wagonbox and Blunt seated high above the box—the fleeing men swing right into view of the converging posses. A round of warning shots, fired overhead by the lawmen, does nothing but frighten the horses into galloping faster. Then firing begins in earnest.

From the wagonbed, the desperadoes return bursts of bullets to keep the pursuers at their distance. Pistol fire is directed at the wagonbed by the bolder and closer possemen. Suddenly, a posseman apparently shifts to a rifle, possibly fine-sighted" across a fence post. With a burst into the endgate, young Roy

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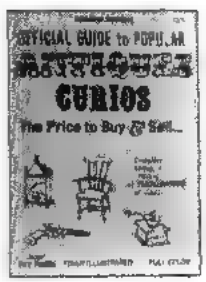

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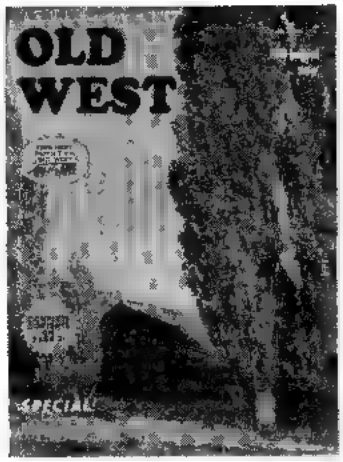

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Blunt, high on his seat, slumps forward. He has been hit. His body topples into the bobsled. And now the nervous team becomes a runaway.

Suddenly a man pops upright from the wagon, hands in air. He leaps out of the bobsled. It is Morley, yelling his surrender. Men on the fastest horses dash past him to the running team and stop the wild flight. Chief Briggs is the first to see inside the sled. Gray and Dowd lay dead.

Morley is seized, handcuffed and chained. It is he who explains what happened: "Someone shot into the endgate. The bullet deflected into Roy Blunt's body, killing him. Then, moments later, a bullet killed Gray. Dowd yelled to me, 'It's hopeless. They've got us. I'm killing myself.' Then Dowd blew out his right temple."

The three bodies and Morley are hauled to the village of Gretna to await a special Burlington train to Lincoln. But one more strange, bloodthirsty action remains.

At Gretna, several hundred townsmen surround the captors and the captive. The bloody bodies of first Gray, then Dowd are lifted up for view. Morley, in chains, is made to pose before the crowd. Suddenly someone asks to see the body of personable, popular and newly-married Roy Blunt which lies carefully shrouded.

The lawmen are reluctant to exhibit Blunt's body as they had those of the convicts. A voice, deep in the crowd, seems to echo the evident surliness of the tightly packed group of onlookers.

"What reckless fool and cheap hero killed our friend just to make a quick capture of these jailbirds?"

Immediately a sound of angry agreement sweeps through the crowd. "Give Morley a gun," another voice yells. "Let him kill Roy's slayer! Morley is going to die anyway!"

Two or three sheriffs step forward and try to explain how Blunt was accidently killed by a ricocheting bullet. Other lawmen back up the explanation. So do some of the possemen. But what about Morley? Morley now raises his voice: "I'm sorry your neighbor and good friend, Roy Blunt, was killed. You folks can be sure that bullet was meant for me." Slowly the emotional outburst subsides and the special train arrives.

All the way into Lincoln, stops are made to exhibit the bodies of Gray and Dowd and to haul out the shackled Morley. Then word is flashed to the train crew that a large and restless crowd awaits them at the Lincoln passenger station. To avoid trouble the train is sidetracked into rails which lead directly to the big pen at the southwest edge of Lincoln. There, the bodies of Gray and Dowd lie unclaimed—so they are turned over to a medical college. Morley, whose part in the actual shooting is somewhat cloudy, gets life for his part in the prison break.

THIS MAN served thirty years behind bars, and was released nineteen years ago. But the broken old man couldn't cope with the world so different from his celled existence. Eventually he was committed to the Nebraska state hospital for mental disorders in Lincoln.

There—on Independence Day of 1960—I was "locked in" his security ward and heard from him his version of the unsuccessful try for freedom which occurred on March 4, 1912. Morley's story followed quite closely the news stories of that day.

Then eighty-four, with sight and hearing impaired, bent and almost devoid of visitors from the "outside" after living more than thirty years locked away, he said he had one big wish—to talk to all young kids who considered crime glamorous and enticing.

"No one," he said in his low, shaking voice, "could be more of a damned fool than a professional criminal. And no one could possibly know that better than this old and useless old man you see here today."

I shall never forget the look in his eyes when I left. And that was long years ago.

Mercy Express to Dragoon Springs

(Continued from page 18)

Tubac, a mining community twenty miles west of the fort, was the turnoff point for Tucson which lay thirty miles to the north.

As the day gave way to night, the miners at Tubac were the first to hear the sound of horses. Charles Poston, a mine manager who held St. John in high regard and who also was acquainted with Doctor Irwin's riding ability, had eleven trail-hardened mustangs saddled and ready to go. The hard riding men brought their sweaty mounts to an abrupt halt and without much ceremony exchanged them for fresh ones. The doctor thanked Mr. Poston for his consideration and forethought, and continued toward Tucson.

The two troopers on the fast rolling wagon had done a good job of spreading the news of the tragedy. At short intervals all along the road great bonfires were burning to guide the six riders through the night. Chances of capturing the culprits appeared favorable, the doctor thought, with the whole territory so alerted.

The old Camino Real laid out by the Spanish was actually easy to follow, but Doctor Irwin would wave gratefully to the ranchers for their efforts. He let his mustang choose its own gait, and the horse seemed to know what was expected. About midnight the riders were nearing Tucson and could see more huge fires burning in the public square.

TUCSON was to be a principal stop on the Butterfield route, and in a few days the first stage would be arriving. The townspeople who would have been celebrating that historic fact, were instead holding a public wake for the dead at Dragoon Springs.

When the doctor and his escort galloped into the plaza, the band which had been playing a funeral dirge struck up a lively Irish air in his honor. But Doctor Irwin went directly to the newly constructed Butterfield Station. He was more concerned in keeping one man alive than mourning for the dead. At the station

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the tired mustangs were exchanged for fresh Butterfield stock, and the ride was resumed toward the east and the San Pedro. Thus far, the men had traveled fifty miles, not quite half way.

The last stretch of the long run was completely wild and unsettled. The encouraging bonfires which defined so well the roadway between Tubac and Tucson, were noticeably missing. But the stars were at their brightest, enabling the men to follow the set of wagon tracks made by the two troopers the night before.

Five miles out of Tucson, they had their first casualty. One horse soldier got saddle sick and had to go back. Doctor Irwin and the other four continued without him. After what seemed like an eternity, they at last reached the construction camp at the San Pedro.

Upon their arrival at the camp, and before dismounting, the concerned doctor inquired about the current condition of St. John. He was told gravely that Silas was still alive but in a desperate condition.

Still mounted, a puzzled expression crossed the surgeon's face. There were several large fires burning within the perimeter of the encampment. With the aid of the flickering flames, he scanned the limits of the property. The lack of activity was a puzzling aspect, but he was more perplexed at the apparent absence of horseflesh.

"Where is everybody?" he asked. A burly-appearing laborer with a heavy drawl, who was holding his animal's bridle solicitously, chose to answer.

"Well, sir," he said, "some are up at the Springs, but most are out looking for them fellers that done the killing."

The doctor manifested his feelings with some strong barracks language, then turned to the escort behind him. "Well, horse soldiers," he said, "do you reckon your nags can run another twenty-three miles?"

"These are stage-pulling horses, sir. They're tough."

The five riders quietly dismounted and led the tired animals to the watering trough. The tough beasts were hot and lathered, and were not allowed to drink too much.

"All right, men," Irwin said, "let's ride."

ONCE ON THE road the game beasts quickened their stride and for a moment seemed to be taking the terrific pace in high style. But after a mile of the killing gait, while the fires at the construction camp could still be seen, one animal faltered. The cavalryman who was riding him pulled back on the reins and brought the laboring horse to a stop. Since the camp was still in sight, the others rode on without him.

By early morning of the 16th the Dragoon Mountains loomed straight ahead, outlined by the rising sun. Sagebrush and mesquite took on a vivid color as piercing fingers of light touched the thorny foliage of the desert vegetation. To the four mounted men, however, the countryside was a huge colorless blur. Their weary eyes were focused only on the outlined ridges of the Dragoon Mountains. The doctor's head whirled, and he

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began to reel in the saddle. Only sheer determination kept him forging ahead. They were so close now, each moment was precious. Ten full hours they had been in the saddle. All night, from sundown to sun-up, they had ridden on their errand of mercy. They were still riding hard when suddenly they had their first fatality.

They felt it more because they were so near the end. One of the horses stepped in a gopher hole and splintered a leg. Quickly and mercifully, they put the brave beast out of its misery. If they had had more time they would have given him a real military send off.

The men pressed on, with two soldiers riding double. It slowed them up some, but within the hour they were riding into Dragoon Springs.

Mr. Archibald was standing in the shed's doorway when the exhausted riders arrived. The doctor hurriedly dismounted, then swung the saddle bags containing his surgical instruments off the tired animal's back.

"Where's the injured man?" the doctor inquired of the newspaperman.

"In here, doctor," Archibald quickly answered. "We didn't expect you for another day."

"We rode some," the doctor replied casually as he stepped across the threshold into the shed. A strong odor of decaying flesh permeated the interior.

The following is a part of Doctor Irwin's report to his commanding officer at Fort Buchanan:

"I arrived at Dragoon Springs on the 16th., and immediately attended Silas St. John. He was an amazing man. By all medical rules, St. John was a dead man upon my arrival. But no, when I entered the rude shed, he was sitting up and smiling cheerfully."

AN ARTICLE written and submitted by Dr. B. J. D. Irwin, and published in the *American Journal of Medical Sciences* for October 1859, contains an excellent description of what followed after Irwin's arrival.

"On the 15th of September, 1858, I was requested to visit one of the stations of the Southern Overland Mail Company, where a number of men were reported to have been dangerously wounded. I set out at once, and arrived at the place early the next morning, after a smart ride of one hundred and fifteen miles.

"I found that three of the four wounded men had already died. The condition of the survivor, Silas St. John, a strong robust, healthy young man, of twenty-four, a native of New York, was as follows:

"He was weak and pallid from loss of blood, sleep and constant mental and physical suffering; his disposition was cheerful, and he evinced much pleasure at the prospect of having his wounds attended to. A deep, incised wound, about eight inches in length extending from the point of the acromion process, passing inwards, downwards, and backwards, laid open the shoulder-joint, passed through the external portion of the head of the humerus, and thence downward, splintering the bone through about four inches of its course. The wound in the thigh proved to be a severe lesion of the soft parts, about eight inches long and three inches deep.

"After a careful examination, I saw it would be impossible to make any effort to save the arm; I therefore determined to remove it at once. The patient was informed of the necessity for the operation, and his permission was accorded almost cheerfully. The only assistance that I could command was from the three men forming my escort. Having made a kind of bed of some bags of corn, the patient was placed on it. One of the men having been instructed how to compress the axillary artery, and the other assistant properly disposed of, I removed the limb as follows: The patient lying on his back with the shoulder elevated, I placed myself on the outside, and grasping the arm, I passed the catling through the original wound, thence inwards behind the fractured point of the humerus, and downwards, forming a large flap from the anterior and inner aspect of the arm, which made up for the deficiency caused by the character of the wound, which left the superior-posterior aspect of the joint entirely devoid of muscular tissue. With the aid of a scalpel, the remaining portion of the head and neck of the humerus was removed from the glenoid cavity. Thus the ugly appearing limb was amputated from his body. Afterwards, I laid the large flap over the glenoid cavity and sewed it with catgut, ending the operation.

"After a brief rest, I left Dragoon Springs with Col. Leach, and his party, and six days later St. John got into a wagon and rode to the fort, where I attended him further till his remarkable recovery."

THIS ACCOUNT in Doctor Irwin's own words gives a vivid idea of the man, his skill, bravery and endurance. He performed an operation under the most trying circumstances, yet made it seem merely routine. He always gave Silas full credit for his own recovery, attributing St. John's miraculous recuperation to an iron will to live.

Dr. Bernard John Dowling Irwin became a man of many achievements, including the winning of the first Congressional Medal of Honor. But he always said that saving the life of such a man as St. John was the most rewarding accomplishment. After his patient recovered at Fort Buchanan, the two men never crossed trails again.

Silas, minus an arm, was placed in charge of the Butterfield Overland Mail Station at the Pima Villages at Sacatan, just north of what today is Casa Grande, Arizona. He lived to a ripe old age and died in San Diego in 1919.

Mr. Archibald, the self-sacrificing correspondent for the Memphis *Avalanche*, who stayed with Silas all the while and nursed him along, waited at Dragoon Springs until the station keeper arrived. He bought the first ticket ever sold at that station, and departed on the first east-bound coach September 25, 1858.

Goddard Bailey, the only through passenger on that initial stage, who at the time was special agent for the Postmaster General, heard the story of the

tragedy from Mr. Archibald and included it in his voluminous report.

The three culprits were never apprehended. As far as is known they went unpunished for their heinous crime.

Grass-Grown Streets

(Continued from page 23)

would become the site of—in my opinion—the most historical town of the Mother Lode country. Construction of a trading post was begun immediately, and the men named the new settlement after their ex-commander, General Zachary Taylor—"Old Rough and Ready."

That the new town grew rapidly is evidenced by its population of 3,000 in early 1850. And a more rebellious yearling can't be found in the annals of the West. In April a mass meeting of the populace was called by Colonel E. F. Brundage to protest high taxes and the breakdown of law and order. The result of that assembly was secession from the Union and formation of The Great Republic of Rough and Ready, a free and independent state. Further, a president was duly elected and a constitution drafted and signed.

Whether or not Rough and Ready has been the only town—or the smallest—to secede from the nation is not known, but that it was the shortest-lived republic cannot be denied. In fact, during the patriotic ferver of Independence Day, 1850, the Stars and Stripes was raised, The Great Republic dissolved, and the entire incident became only a unique fragment of history. But the community remained downstage center to play out other parts in the gold rush story—parts that make it one of today's favorite meccas for back-country devotees. By carefully sifting the legends, and selecting what seems to be accurate, I found the tracks of several events which merit being preserved.

Rough and Ready lies along the floor of a narrow, wooded ravine through which, during the town's revolt, passed the only road to Sacramento and the Bay Area. This offered an opportunity that had to knock but once. A chain was placed across the road at a strategic point, and a toll station established. The huge spikes which held the chain are still visible in the trees beside Highway 20.

On a day in 1850 a slave girl—Caroline Allen—who worked in Old Slave Mine, rode into Rough and Ready on her donkey, dismounted and stuck her cottonwood switch into the ground beside the blacksmith shop. That switch took root and in time grew to a height of seventy-five feet. It was marked THE SLAVE GIRL TREE, and not until it had reached the age of 111 years did it finally crash to the ground. When I first visited Rough and Ready the remains of that huge tree still rested where it had fallen. And Caroline? Well, she moved to San Francisco where she became blind and later was drowned in a well into which she had leaped when her dress caught fire. But Caroline was only one of the fairer sex who lent flavor to the town's legends.

PROBABLY Rough and Ready's most historical event was the debut of Lotta Crabtree in the old blacksmith shop on Main Street. The year was 1855, and the beautiful, internationally famous Lola Montez had retired to Grass Valley, living only two doors from the home of John and Mary Crabtree. Lola had arrived in California two years before from Europe where she had basked in the admiration and close friendship of such greats as Ludwig of Bavaria, Franz Liszt, Alexander Dumas, George Sand and Victor Hugo. After her fabulous career it was only natural that she soon became bored with the inactivity of small town life. Then Lola found an outlet for her pent energies. She recognized in her neighbor's ten-year-old daughter a potential talent which she determined should be developed.

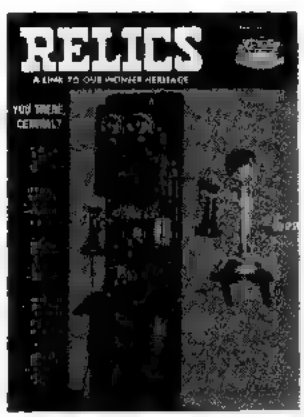
Thus began the long and colorful career of Lotta Crabtree, later one of this country's first ladies of the theater. Miss Montez spent all of her spare time during 1855 in teaching the vivacious little girl songs and dances which often were performed for guests in the Montez home. When Lola considered her protégé ready for her first public appearance, she took her to Rough and Ready where Lotta danced for the miners on an anvil in the blacksmith shop. That anvil was later returned to its original place, and the shop still stands—sagging and weatherbeaten—beside the highway. Even the dim and checked sign: W. H. FLIPPIN, GENERAL BLACKSMITH, is faintly visible over the big front door.

So it was that Lotta Crabree achieved her very first triumph in Rough and Ready. From that night of dancing by candlelight she went on to San Francisco, New York, and international fame, actually accumulating a fortune of $4,000,000 by the time of her death in 1924. But destiny was not as kind to her mentor, as Lola Montez died penniless in 1860.

Captain Townsend, Colonel Brundage, Caroline Allen, Lola Montez, Lotta Crabtree—these are but a few of the shadows who walk the backstreets of old Rough and Ready. And the town has outlived them all—because its rich heritage is the stuff of which legends are made.

From Grass Valley, Highway 49 winds and descends southerly through some of the most charming rural countryside in the Sierra Nevada. There was a time when scores of tiny camps vibrated with life in the mountains which straddle this route—camps whose very names tickle my curiosity: Bunkumville, Whiskey Slide, Peppermint Hill and Rot Gut. But they're gone—forgotten—and their stories are buried with them. Then—at thirty miles—the road swings in close to the Old Bayley House which marks the town limits of Pilot Hill.

MINING first began at the base of the conical mountain known as Pilot Hill when hundreds of prospectors converged on the area in 1849. Although two towns—Centerville and Pittsfield—already existed nearby, a new camp sprang up on the site practically overnight, and was given the name of the peak that sweeps up from its northerly outskirts. The three communities soon consolidated, adopting the name Center-



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ville which was retained until the post office was officially designated as Pilot Hill.

That the town prospered can be confirmed by a stroll through its remains. The old hotel, now reduced to one story, still reflects the one-time elegance of the architecture. A small cemetery, tucked in among sheltering locust trees, and dating back to the 50s, rests on a tranquil slope east of the tumbledown main street.

And there's what is left of Bayley's dream. Alcandor A. Bayley came to California from Vermont in 1849. Two years later he bought the Oak Valley House at Pilot Hill which he owned until it was destroyed by fire in 1861. Convinced that the railroad would eventually pass through the town, Bayley immediately began construction of a new hostelry, a majestic three-story brick mansion which still bears his name.

Old Bayley House was opened to the public on May 15, 1862. Although it was not fated to be a stopover for rail travelers, it was—and still is—an edifice of outstanding beauty. Colonial plus Old Southern Plantation probably best describes its architectural style. The first and second story verandas are pillared and vine-covered, shaded by immense, ancient oaks and locusts. Withered husks are all that remain of the once lush, terraced garden, but the house itself wears a fine tone of age and stands as substantial as on the day of its grand opening.

On the Bayley property California's first Grange Hall was dedicated November 28, 1880. The exact location is now marked by a monument near the old manse.

After leaving Pilot Hill, the road swings southeasterly toward Coloma and Sutter's Mill where Jim Marshall changed the course of a nation's history in 1848. At the eighteen mile point—a mile before Coloma's limits—a narrow lane invited me to turn right, just to see where it would lead. And a lucky turn it was, because that short side trip led me down the one street of picturesque Lotus, only a half mile south of the highway. Don't pass by this street of charm. It's a relic-strewn byway that will bid you to linger a while.

The hamlet was originally called Marshall, then Uniontown, and finally, with the establishment of a post office, it was assigned the permanent, exotic name of Lotus. During its peak of prosperity in the '50s, and while known as Uniontown, the population exceeded 2,000. It was then that Adam Lohry—probably the town's "First Citizen"—built the brick store, complete with heavy iron doors, which stands deserted but staunch to this very day. Soon thereafter a brick mansion was built beside the store, then the two-story stone Uniontown Hotel, both of which now are crumbling.

I saw the old mansion with its gables, old-fashioned garden and tiny orchard as a veritable storybook house. And I envisioned the Lohry store as the happy ending of a pioneer's dream, as it was at the beginning; but subsequent research revealed to me a story of losses and brooding—and finally Adam Lohry's death by suicide.

The old Uniontown cemetery lies on down the road just beyond the townsite, with epitaphs dating back more than a century, ornamental fences enclosing family plots, the usual tranquillity.

Lotus whispered, "Stay with me," but Coloma, Fiddletown, Drytown and Carson Hill beckoned from the mountains ahead—and it was with reluctance that I headed back to the Mother Lode highway and swung right toward Sutter's Mill.

Barren Victory of the Stallion Hunters

(Continued from page 27)

the blowing of wind through the trees, and birds singing. Suddenly, I heard the crackle of leaves and a snort. Looking up through the vines I saw the most beautiful horse in the world. He was grazing, and jet black. His tail swept the ground and his mane was long. The wind was blowing it to and fro. He was as slick as if someone had poured oil over him.

Nora was picking near me and Ethel about ten feet away, as we never did get very far away from each other. We had a little special whistle we called ever so often, then the others would answer. We always knew where the others were. I reached over and touched Nora's hand with my stick. As she looked at me I

An old cemetery just north of San Juan.

put my hand over my mouth, a signal to keep quiet, at the same time pointing to the horse. Then I gave the whistle and Ethel looked at us. We pointed to the horse. The stallion was not more than twenty feet away.

The stallion would raise his head now and then, looking around at a bunch of mares grazing not too far away. He seemed to be keeping watch over them. Accidentally I dropped my stick, making a noise in the vines. The stallion raised his head high, snorting with the weirdest sound. His nostrils were as large as a saucer, or they looked that large to us. His eyes looked like balls of fire, and he had not seen us yet. We were scared to move.

We three had on homemade bonnets, with slits run in the double top. The bonnets had long tails, with strings to tie under the chin. He might have thought we were animals when he spotted us with the bonnets on. He came nearer and nearer, within a few feet of the vines on the other side of us and pawed the ground, his head going up and down. Then with a frightening squeal he stood on his hind feet, flailing the air. His eyes looked wild and mean.

We did not run; we lay right on the ground in the vines, the briars sticking in our flesh. Gradually we eased farther into the foliage. The leaves were large and thick enough to hide us completely but we could easily hear ourselves breathing.

The stallion either lost sight of us, or thought we were animals for he turned with a leap, kicking his feet high and running to where the other horses were. They already sensed trouble and the whole bunch took off in a gallop. My sisters and I stood up, watching and thankful to be alive. We picked no more berries, but got our pails and headed for home, scared to death. When we got there we told Dad about our experience. He got all excited and said that was the stallion all the men had been looking for. Someone had seen him in the edge of Big Thicket.

THERE are some places in the Big Thicket no man has ever been. It was the home of panthers, wild boars, wildcats, and wolves. Dad went into town and told what we girls had seen. He helped organize some men to ride for the hunt. All the farmers were ready.

Several men had ropes, hoping to corner the horse and get several ropes on him at one time. They had sleeping and food bags. It had rained some and the tracks were not very plain. They would spend several days searching, then go to their homes, rest up and head out again. Some of the men had good stock dogs.

When three months had passed, they were about to give up but one day in a green valley on the Trinity River about twenty miles down south from Livingston, they spotted a bunch of horses. The black stallion stood out from all the rest, now and then raising his head high to look in every direction to watch over his mares.

There was a deep ravine about a mile away on the river. The men hoped to circle around and head them for it. Each man knew what to do. This time they had left their dogs at a farmhouse.

The wild horses started to run for the river. It took every man working as a team but they herded the mares in the ravine with the stallion squealing, pawing and running in every direction trying to get the mares out. All the men closed in with their ropes ready. As the stallion ran near one man, a rope would be thrown over its head. While he was squealing and walking on his hind legs, a second man would have a chance to land a rope over his head, then another. One man roped his front feet as they were up in the air. This tripped the horse and he fell to the ground. When the men finally had the stallion choked down he was moaning and snorting, and the men were tired out themselves.

Two of the men went for a Model T Ford with high side boards, and when they came back they brought the dogs. It was decided to tie the ropes on the horns of several saddles and drag the stallion up in the truck by the hind feet. They knew better than to let him stand, as he would jump out of the truck. Wide boards were laid from the truck to the ground to slide the stallion up on. This was a lot of work and several men got hurt pretty bad.

With all the noise and yelling and confusion, one big dog ran up and bit the horse on the side of the jaw. He was a powerful dog, could hold a boar or wolf between his teeth. The men could see the stallion's jaw was torn, but they had nothing to put on it so they had to take him in to town bleeding. In Cleveland the wild horse was put in the cattle yard, and his wound was treated.

The fence around the yard was eight feet high. It was made of very thick boards and strong fenceposts. There were seats built high, too, as the town had their nice rodeos and people came to watch. It took some time to untie the stallion. When he did get up he was fighting mad. He pawed the air, walking on his hind feet, and nearly jumped the fence several times. The men wanted to keep him there, feed him, and try to tame and ride him. The yard's owner, Mr. Riley, had offered cash to anyone who could break and ride the black horse.

All the men were tired and standing around talking when someone yelled, "Look out for the dog that bit the stallion!" He was having a hard fit. And when the fit was over, he got up foaming at the mouth, his eyes wild and glassy.

The men knew the dog must be mad and it had bitten the stallion. They shot the dog, cut off the head and sent it to Austin for tests. This meant they would have to wait to see if the dog had really had rabies. It took several days to get the report, and it turned out as feared.

Most of the men gathered every day to watch the stallion. The horse acted always the same—as if nothing was wrong. It even looked like his jaw was doing all right, only swollen pretty bad.

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He ate some and drank water. Then one day the big horse began to stumble, looked wild out of his eyes, and would fall down with a hard fit. Or he would run right into the fence. He would paw the fence, even bite big pieces out of the planks. When the spell wore off he would stand trembling, glassy eyed, snorting and looking around as if he knew something had happened to him.

PEOPLE from miles around came to Cleveland. Doctors couldn't get near the horse to do anything for him. He would have one hard fit right after another, each being harder than the one before. He would start off with a spell—walking on his hind feet, making terrible squealing sounds, all the while tearing at the fence, kicking, falling broadside and repeatedly getting up to attack the fence. He had several of the thick boards torn off. Foam from his mouth was everywhere.

The men knew he had to be disposed of, but it was against the law to shoot a horse. No one wanted to shoot him anyway, but he was getting worse all the time. At last the men got together and elected the sheriff to shoot the stallion. The sheriff was a crack shot and well respected in the town.

It seemed better to wait until the stallion was down with a spell and then shoot him. The sheriff got in a good position, and when the stallion's fit was over and he lay still, the sheriff's bullet struck him right behind the ear. With a roar the stallion got up, walking on his hind feet and fighting worse than he had at any time, even with blood streaming from his head.

It was hard to get another shot as he was moving so fast. Boards were flying through the air, and the horse's feet were torn and bleeding from kicking and pawing the fence. The sheriff shot again, getting a good aim, then again and again. Each time the shot would knock the stallion down but he would always rise and head right in the direction from which the bullet came.

The sheriff had shot six times, and had to reload his gun. When the stallion fell in another spell, the sheriff aimed again right between the forelegs, hoping to hit him in the heart. This time the stallion got up and staggered over to the fence, trembling but more calm than he had been. Looking up with head high, he gave one agonized squeal and fell to the ground dead.

The men put on gloves and laid all the torn boards on the stallion. They brought more wood, and set fire to it. It took several days to burn up the horse, and the men had to remove all the fence. They poured dip all over the place to kill the germs. My dad and two oldest brothers watched the last days of the big black horse. They could never get over the fact that it took seven bullets to kill him.

The city passed a law then that every dog had to have a license and shots. The stallion hunt and its sad ending was the main topic of conversation for years. It was something they never wanted to happen again.

Truly Western

(Continued from page 6)

like pads. It looks very much like padding inside a horse collar pad and is good insulation. Buffalo will find a good dusty place and begin to roll and squirm in order to remove the heavy coat of hair. The more he rolls and kicks the more the ground is wallowed out in a saucerlike shape which fits his body better. I have seen one buffalo stay in one place and wallow for hours. Many buffalo will use the same wallow and will wear off the top soil until the depression is sometimes two feet deep.

An infestation of ticks, fleas, deer flies, etc. will also cause the animal to roll in the dusty wallow. The wearing away of the top soil in a wallow and the natural oils and salty sweat from the animal's body renders the ground practically useless for growing grass; hence old buffalo wallows are still easily visible in pastures that have never been cultivated.

The lot in Lawton, Oklahoma that I built my house on and where I still live has an old wallow on the back of it near the alley. I have spaded, hoed, worked and planted that spot with garden seed for the last thirty-seven years but I can't get anything to grow there to amount to anything at all. That particular spot is about as useless as a hitching post in Detroit.

There are some brand new buffalo wallows out here in the Wichita Wildlife Refuge. I have sat in a boat on some of the beautiful little lakes many times and fished for perch and catfish while watching the buffalo go through their ancient ritual of creating a "buffalo wallow."—Cherokee Pete Williamson, 1214 Ferris Avenue, Lawton, Oklahoma 73501

Two Hackberrys

This picture is not too good but the horse I am on was raised by Byron Snyder who ranched not far from Moran, Shackelford County, Texas. Mr. Snyder gave the horse to Lou Hadley about 1920. At that time I was feeding steers for Hadley Brothers near Baird. Most all ranchers had a string of horses they used only for themselves. I remember Mr. Hadley pointing to this horse one morning as we were going on cow work, saying, "Hackberry, you can have that bay gelding to put in your string. I don't like him. Byron Snyder gave him to me but he's no good. You might make a good horse out of him."

One day I hooked up to plant some oats. I needed an extra work horse so I hooked the bay gelding on. After plowing a few rounds I stopped at the end of the field near the ranch house. I went around and put my arm around his neck and patted him and said, "Old horse, this is the last time you have to wear a harness." Yes, I thought he was the prettiest horse I ever saw. To my surprise my old cowboy friend, Shorty Kelso from Fort Worth, had come to visit me (unexpectedly) and had hid behind a big tree and had heard me talking to the old horse. It was a happy surprise when he yelled at me, "Where did you learn how to talk to horses that way?" Well, off come the harness and we went in for dinner. Shorty at that time was a top bulldogger and bronc rider—among the best.

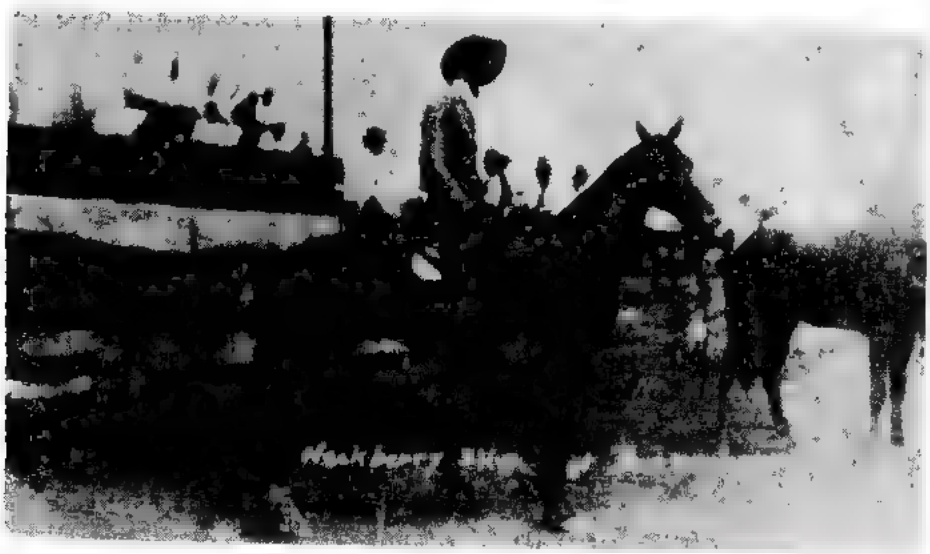
I continued to use the bay gelding on cow work and country rodeo and trained him to become the No. 2 polo horse. He was selected to play with the Army team in England in the early '20s.

He and his stablemate, Gay Boy #1 Best in the World, were killed in 1923 when an airplane fell on their stable in Long Island. Gay Boy was raised by Will Gay of Coleman, Texas, my good friend. The bay gelding played under my name, Hackberry, and at the time of his death was owned by a man named Fleischmann known as the Fleischmann Yeast King of New York.

The saddle I am riding was made by Chas. Collins of Globe, Arizona. It cost about $400. I was going to give it away as first prize in calf roping in average at a rodeo I put on at Safford, Arizona in September 1918 for Graham-Cochise Cattle Raisers Association. The evening before the next day's show, the roper was running the calves for practice. Amos McEwing broke his leg as he got

(Continued on page 72)

Hackberry Johnson on Hackberry.



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Truly Western

(Continued from page 69)

off to tie his calf so the next day I suggested that someone nominate some roper for him. Clay McGonigal was nominated by the cowboys. When the two days' roping were over Clay had won the saddle for his good friend Amos. At that time Amos lived near Ft. Thomas, Arizona. Clay McGonigal was World Champion steer roper for many years. He and his father ranched in and around Monument, New Mexico. His horse brand was an apple. Little Joe Gardner was Clay's partner in most all big steer roping. Clay was killed by an electric wire in or near Casa Grande, Arizona in the latter part of 1918. Little Joe died some years later. Two of the world's greatest steer ropers almost bedded down together.

All old rodeo fans have heard of me or seen me in action. I have been on some bad ones. At eighty-two I don't feel too old—just act that way. Try not to be childish. Just laugh at defeat, not curse or cry.

In 1912 I went to work with Boone Brothers Wild West. Bronco Bob and Pecos Pate Boone were fine men but sure had a rough string of broncs. The name of their best bronc was Billy Quantrill. Bob was a fancy shooter, Pate a great steer roper and saddle bronc rider, and Dee, the youngest brother, was a trick roper and all around cowboy for a kid. Dee lives in Henryetta, Oklahoma, Pate lives at Christoval, Texas, and Bob at San Diego, California. I visited Pate recently and we told each other some salty stories. Sure did enjoy his cooking!

Well, I will be heading west before long. Each year I carry a few buffalo and work at Gallup during the Indian Ceremonial in August. Have been there the past six years. If you are planning a vacation in August, I suggest you visit the Inter-tribal Ceremonial and all-Indian rodeo. Sure are some fine folks around Gallup.

If anybody would like for me to furnish some buffalo for a fair or rodeo this season, all you have to do is write or call me.—Hackberry Johnson, 2002 Wilson, Austin, Texas. Phone: 442-0413.

Frontier Barbed Wire

Dear Joe:

My husband has been a subscriber to TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES since the first issues. As he was rereading the June 1965 TRUE WEST, he remarked about "Frontier Barbed Wire" on page 11 and asked me to write to tell you that we are living in a homestead area where there are several kinds of antique barbed wire.

He had been using the Kelly Diamond Point, Patented February 11, 1868, for his corral. As soon as he read the article he removed the wire before someone else saw it. It is quite a piece. Also we think that we have a piece of buffalo wire, homemade.

Bob also mentioned the fact there are old pieces of barbed wire scattered over the hills around here. As the homesteaders left and fences fell down from lack of care and repair, the livestock have scattered it. Others have bought the abandoned land for grazing—not taking the time and money to remove the wire. My husband's dad, John Baptie, came from Scotland and homesteaded in this area about 1910, one of the last to do so. We know where some of the original wire which was used at that time is scattered. There is evidence of homesteaders in the middle 1800s. Mining was established before that time.

Here in Muldoon, Idaho there used to be a post office but about twenty years ago it was closed but not removed. The ranchers and miners in this area get their mail at Carey, as we do. At the townsite of Muldoon (no buildings—just cellar holes) I have picked up old heavy tin sardine cans, bottles, pieces of heavy thick-colored glass of early-time liquor or beer bottles. I had a bottom of a liquor or beer bottle with the name of Milwaukee 1856 but I can't seem to find it any more. Too many wanted it but I didn't want to part with it. Someone must have it—I don't anymore.

We also have many Indian relics, including a skull crusher spear head. More than 700 of our arrowheads have been given to the Idaho Historical Society and were on display at the Capitol in Boise. We still have about twice that many here at home.

My husband has a custom-made desk with a plate glass top. Under the glass, on cotton, he has outlined the shape of Idaho in arrowheads. No two are the same size or shape. He has also outlined the Baptie livestock brand, the name of the capital, and the name of King Hill, the winter quarters of the sheep business.

Since we read about the barbed wire we have noticed here at least four kinds: Kelly Diamond Point, Champion, M. C. Shin, and Waukegan, half-round barb. Oh yes, and the buffalo wire—at least it looks like it. There may be more than these. Specimens of the barbed wire that we have on hand are available to all who contact us as long as it lasts.

The people and incidents about whom Russell C. Prunty wrote are well known around here and tales are still being told about them. Some of the old-timers are still living and are full of stories of the "Good ol' days." Since Prunty sent the story of Muldoon to you we feel we are still on the map.—Mrs. Robert G. Baptie, Box 27, Carey, Idaho 83320

Visited Story's Gold Mine

I have been a subscriber for only two years, but I wouldn't lose one copy of TRUE WEST or FRONTIER TIMES. I have known some of the people and places in your stories.

There was one about a gold mine above Durango, Colorado from which a man took samples every day until he had four sacks of gold. Then he carried them part way down the mountain, hid them, and could never find them again. I was in that mine in 1918 or 1919. My brother-in-law was living near that mine at the time, and he took my brother and me inside.

I worked for Ed Pargen, brother of Ben Pargen, where the men burned out the Indians by accident. All but one were killed the next morning by some of the Indian bucks. I also worked for Mr. Cooper on Beaver Creek where the man returned after forty years to see if he could find the place.

You have fine magazines. Keep up the good work.—F. C. Tycksen, 3205 Eldredge Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84115

TUMBLEWEEDS
—by Tom K. Ryan
ACE, KNUCKLES HAS BEEN CAPTURED BY INDIANS! I'M GONNA TRY TO RESCUE HIM! WILL YOU GO WITH ME?
SORRY, TUMBLEWEEDS
I'M JUST TAKIN' A BREAK!... I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF A POKER GAME AN' I'M WINNIN' BIG! I CAN'T QUIT NOW!
BUT, IT'S A MATTER OF LIFE AN' DEATH!
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6—Boss of the Trail Herd, 8x10½
7—Bronc to Breakfast, 15x8½
8—Blackfeet Burning Crow Buffalo Range, 11½x8
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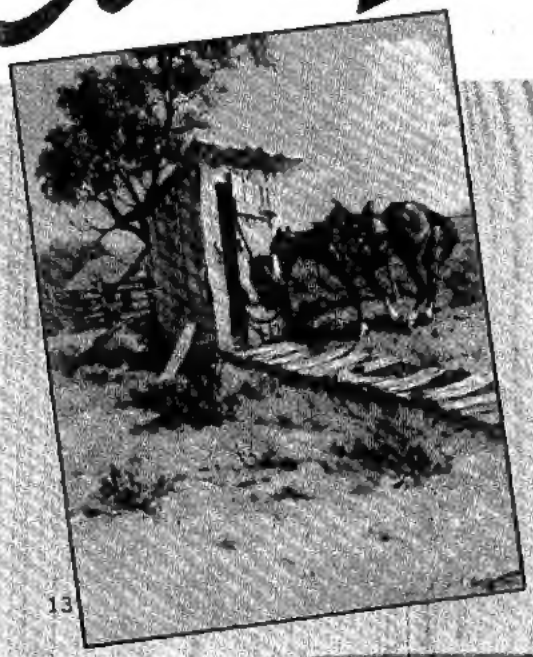

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